

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

BOGATZKY'S GOLDEN TREASURY



Bogatzky's Golden Treasu

FOR

THE CHILDREN OF GOD:

CONSISTING OF

DEVOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL OBSERVAT

FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

BIBLIOTHECA
DEC 1 80
BODLEIAN

London:
JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STRI
MDCCCLXXIX.

138 . i . 700.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

Preface.

—o—

THAT this book may be better understood, and prove a means of edifying every reader, let the following remarks be particularly attended to :—

1. The Petitions and the Divine Answers which are to be found among several of the Scripture texts in the titles, may be of admirable use to many. The questions generally run in the complaining, inquiring strain, for information and redress, under the painful anxieties of a wounded conscience ; and the answers are well calculated to relieve and inform the distressed soul. They generally consist of gracious promises of Scripture, which may easily be turned into petitions ; and if relief does not immediately come, yet the soul gets ease by thus pouring out its complaints and reminding the Lord of his promises, faith in the word is hereby strengthened, and the soul is led to see that trouble and anxiety must lead the way to rejoicing and triumph.

2. The distinction that is made in several parts of the book between bare morality and true Christianity

respecting the motives of actions, the principle from which they are done, and the degree and extent of them, may also be useful. Morality is not Christianity, though there can be no true Christianity without morality. Moral actions may be done from natural principles, and will certainly centre in self, in some shape or other: but a truly Christian act must proceed from a gracious principle in the heart. A moral man and a true Christian may both give something to the poor . . . the poor are relieved by each; but the benevolence of the one may proceed from a natural generosity of spirit, while that of the other comes from a sense of divine favour and bounty already bestowed upon himself. They may both join in the same ordinance, pray to the same Supreme Being, and yet the one continue self-righteous and vainly confident, while the other is humbled, and lives upon divine grace. The principle within makes the difference between them; and they who are only moral would do well to consider the difference.

3. In almost every page there are several passages of Scripture which, taken in connection, serve to throw a light on each other, so that what in one is obscure, is generally opened by its parallel, which will be found very useful, if diligently compared, and serve to show the abundance, the superabundance of light, promises, privileges, and advantages there are in the word of God, and how they become "profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work," and,

through the divine blessing upon him, be made "wise unto salvation."

4. Let the reader be careful to distinguish between a state of safety by faith in Christ, and a state of assurance arising from sensible comforts in the heart. The best Christians experience great changes in the frame of their minds; sometimes they are lively and comfortable, then they are low and depressed; now they have sensible tokens of divine favour, then again these are withdrawn, and they begin to question the safety of their state before God. The enemy often takes advantage of their uncomfortable frames, and would have them question the reality of grace in their heart; and the consequence generally is great anxiety and distress. In order to remove this, it is necessary to consider what is the true foundation of hope, and to distinguish between what is durable and what is changeable.

The work of the Redeemer is a perfect work; nothing can be added to it, and nothing must be taken from it; it is everlasting in its duration and efficacy. Upon this the eye of faith should be invariably fixed, and hence comfort and support in every state are to be drawn. Christ's blood is a constant propitiation; his righteousness is a perfect covering. To these, Reader, have daily recourse for cleansing and recommendation before God; by these you may silence all the accusations of Satan, all the clamours of conscience, all the threatenings of the law; for in Christ the believer is complete, and here he may safely rest in his dullest and heaviest

moments. Happy frames, on the contrary, are bestowed or withheld as it pleases God. You may safely pray for them, because great peace is promised to the children of God; and, generally speaking, the diligent and watchful are most frequently favoured with them. And when you are blessed with them, be thankful; but beware of depending upon them, for this is the readiest way to have them withdrawn. Spiritual pride may arise from this quarter, while a feeling sense of weakness and unworthiness keeps the soul humble, and continually dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone for pardon, strength, and salvation.

5. In spiritual conflicts it will often happen, when God is about to work some great deliverance from some particular sin or pressing temptation, that, before deliverance comes, the believer will think he had never been so wicked or oppressed before; his corruptions are permitted to stir up in him, and he is apt to say, as Moses did respecting the Israelites, that "God has not delivered him at all." Reader, beware of such a conclusion; the greatest darkness is generally a little before sunrise; "the Israelites groaned by reason of their task-masters and heavy burdens," just when God was about to deliver them. Man's extremity is God's opportunity; out of darkness he brings forth light; out of unbelief, faith; and out of pride, humility. His design is to bring down thy self-righteousness and vain confidence; to cut the very sinews of an arm of flesh; to convince thee that deliverance is of himself alone; to bring thee to a

steady dependence upon his power, that his strength may be perfected in thy weakness, and that he may have all the glory. Then will he appear for thee, and work wonderfully; and in all thy after-conflicts of a spiritual kind, follow this advice. Build not thy comfort of pardon upon thy victory, but thy victory upon thy pardon and acceptance with God through Christ: strive not, thinking that thou shalt only have forgiveness of sin when it is conquered: but seek the pardon of sin first, through faith in Christ, and then that it may be manifested to thy heart.

6. In this book are several parts of Scripture-history evangelised, or applied to spiritual purposes in a Gospel way; which may serve as specimens for the improving of many more to the same end; whereby great advantages will arise to the intelligent reader. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" the command to drive out the Canaanites, and if not, their becoming pricks in the eyes of the Israelites, the noble exploits of the Jews in their wars, and the interposition of Providence in their behalf, afford ample matter of caution and instruction to every serious reader. All may be easily brought home and spiritualised, and will teach him to admire free grace: the tokens of Divine favour will warn him of the power of his enemies, will show him the danger of sin and corruption, and the necessity of keeping close to the Captain of his salvation from day to day.

Lastly, dear Reader, beware of formality in the use of this book: it will be of little service barely to read it over. See that these truths be brought home to

thy conscience, and beg of the Almighty that He would be pleased to apply them by His Holy Spirit; then they will be blessed indeed to thy soul. Examine thy experience as thou goest along, particularly how thou hatest and fightest against sin; how thou maintainest communion with God through the Spirit; what it is to live by faith in Christ Jesus. These are subjects much insisted on in this work, and in the knowledge and experience of which consists the greatest part of a Christian's happiness. See if thy graces are lively and vigorous; if they are kept in exercise. The kingdom of heaven is a growing kingdom; the seeds of grace must bring forth fruit.

Contents.

—o—

	PAGE
ABIDE in Christ, . .	16, 212
Abide in the same calling,	156
Abraham's faith, the trial of, ...	112
Abraham's faith, . . .	302
Abstain from all appearance of evil, . . .	273
Acceptance by faith, . .	195
Account, an, to be given of every word, . . .	263
Admonitions, Christian, .	210
Adornings, the, of grace,	59
Advocate, Christ is our, .	345
Afflictions, the use of,	152, 276
Allelujah, ...	35, 183, 366
Alms, how to give, . . .	208
Arise and follow Christ, .	244
Assured trust in God, .	154
Avenge not yourselves, .	175
Babes in Christ, be as, .	135
Backsliders invited to return, ...	348
Believing in Christ, . .	33
Be of good cheer, . . .	96
Be ye doers of the word,	277
Be stedfast in the faith, .	282
Be careful for nothing, .	290
Be fervent in spirit, . .	303
Be not overcome of evil,	336
Behold in mercy, . . .	204
Behold, we come unto thee, ...	346
Bible, the, rule of life, .	129
Blessed are the poor in spirit, ...	139
Blood of Christ cleanseth from sin, . . 91, 228,	267
Born again, ye must be, .	171
Bow, the, set in the cloud, ...	92
Branch, the true, beareth fruit, ...	142
Brotherly love, . 97, 287,	294
Brotherly love, cherish, .	240
By grace ye are saved, .	293
By grace I am what I am,	362
Caleb followed God, . .	298
Captivity, turn again our,	131



PAGE

Cross of Christ, glorying in the, ... 93
Cross, daily take up the, 125
Covenant of grace, the, . 39
Covetousness, avoid, . . 311

Darkness, light in, . . 42
Deceit, the crime of, . . 160
Delay not, now is the time, ... 72
Deliver us from evil, . . 86
Delight thyself in God, . 119
Despair not, Christ is King, ... 275
Diligent, the soul of the, is made fat, ... 312
Direction of God, seeking the, ... 74
Diverse gifts, there are, . 178
Do this in remembrance of me, ... 110
Draw me after thee, . . 300
Dra[w]·[n]igh to God, . 341, 354

E[n]·[a]gements to the ·. 316
F[a]·[i]nt, the, of ·.ingdom, . . 236
[W]·lked with God, 219
[t]·s of pardoning 118
·unications, the 155
·ourselves, . 268, 351
·, Christian, . 124
·f all wait on 314
power of, . . 6

PAGE

Faith, feeling the need of, 27
Faith, the necessity of, . 29
Faith, the obedience of, . 63
Faith, the righteousness of, ... 109
Faith, be strong in, . . 227
Faith, the assurance of, 246, 281
Faith in Christ, living by, 61
Faith overcomes sin, . . 73
Faith only desires Christ, 200
Faith and duty, . . . 265
Faint-hearted, the, encouraged, ... 289
Fall not out by the way, 294
Fear not, thy King cometh, ... 103
Fear not, I am with thee, 210
Fear of man, the, is a snare, ... 305
Fig-tree, the barren, . . 60
Fighting the good fight, 214
First-born, the, slain, . 299
Flesh, crucifying the, . 67
Follow Christ, ... 323
Fruit, bringeth forth, . . 95
Fulness and freeness of the Gospel, the, . . . 102

Gift, every good, is from above, ... 179
Give an account of thy stewardship, ... 350
Glory be to God, . . . 205
God, safety in, ... 13
God, confidence in, . . . 45
God, communion with, 56, 111
God, the peace of, . . 78
God careth for you, 123, 193, 250

	PAGE
God, the fear of,	255
God, joy and peace in,	261
God, there is none like,	310
God is love,	24
God in Christ reconciling sinners,	44
God guides the simple,	77
God is willing to give the new heart,	115
God is not a God of confusion,	116
God forgets not his people,	133
God the guide of his people,	159, 340
God heareth the cry of his saints,	173
God and Mammon, ye cannot serve,	232
God to be served in spirit and truth,	251
God honours them that honour him,	301
Gospel, the, or glad tidings,	51
Gospel, the, came not in word only,	89
Gospel, the, a feast of fat things,	108
Gospel, the nature of the,	254
Grace abounding in adversity,	23
Grace, justified by,	19
Grace, growing in,	36
Grace, the covenant of,	39
Grace, the adorning of,	59
Grace, by, I am what I am,	70
Grace, by, are ye saved,	224
Heal me, O Lord,	120
Heart, the Lord looketh on the,	158
Helper, the Lord is thy,	319
Hidings, the, of God's face,	132
High-minded, be not,	76
Hope to the end,	265
Hosanna,	1
Humility and repentance,	69
Humility,	146, 316
Humility, be clothed with,	185
Humiliation, the need of,	321
Increase of grace,	284
Indwelling sin,	170
In the name of Christ,	260
In Him we live and move,	324
In wisdom thou hast made them all,	327
In patience possess your souls,	356
Israel shall blossom and bud,	332
It is done,—It is finished,	291
I will heal your backslidings,	331
Jacob's dream,	182
Josiah, the book of the law read to,	256
Joseph a type of Christ,	270
Judgment, Lord, enter not into,	122
Judged, we must all be,	363
Justifieth, it is Christ that,	206
Justification is by faith,	358
Keep thy heart with diligence,	190

PAGE

Keep the Lord always before you, ... 352
Kingdom, power, and glory, the, is God's, . 38
Knowledge, the, that saveth, ... 75

Lawful things, beware of, 177
Learn of me, Christ says, 144
Liberty, the, of the Spirit, 188
Light in darkness, . . 42
Living in the right way, 137
Living to God, ... 147
Live, we must, on Christ, 342
Longing for Heaven, . 298
Lord of Hosts, the, is his name, ... 79
Lord, the, is mightier than all, ... 104
Love, God is, ... 24
Love of God, the, constraineth us, ... 71
Love one another, . 83, 168
Love not the world, . . 245
Love is the fruit of the Spirit, ... 286
Lust, the sin and danger of, ... 320

Manna, Christ is the true, 353
Meekness recommended, 313
Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord, . . 339
Moderation, ... 280
Mystery, the, of the Godhead, ... 234

Nature, the light of, and the Gospel, ... 242

PAGE

New creatures, ye are, in Christ, ... 176

Omnipotence, the, of God, 3
One thing is needful, . 84
Open thou mine eyes, . 211
O taste and see that God is good, ... 233

Panting after God, . . 191
Pardon, God will, abundantly, ... 127
Persecution, Christians endure, ... 5
Pass your time in fear, . 226
Peace, the, of God, . . 78
Peace, the, of God, passeth knowledge, ... 226
Pleasures, worldly, pass away, ... 37
Pour out your heart before God, ... 361
Pray without ceasing, . 15
Pray and wait, . . . 197, 337
Pray, the Spirit helpeth us to, ... 81
Prayer, stedfastness in, . 55
Prayer, believing, . . . 63
Prayer, the Lord's, . . 166
Prayer, frequency of, . 169
Prayer, God answers, 279, 306
Present your bodies to God, ... 304
Preserved in Christ Jesus, 184
Pride opposed to holiness, 157
Professors, false and true, 52
Promise, the first, . . . 53
Providence of God, the, mysterious, ... 105

	PAGE
Promises, the, are faithful,	126
Praise, laud, and bless his name,	213
Prayer,	367
Purifying their hearts by faith,	94
Reaping in joy,	99
Redemption through the blood of Christ,	12
Refuge, God is a,	13
Regeneration necessary,	264
Remember me, O God, for good,	107
Repentance,	14, 248
Resist every sin,	239
Riches, true, in Christ,	136
Righteousness and strength in Christ,	172, 194
Robe of righteousness, Christ is a,	148
Run your race with patience,	230
Sabbath-day, remember the,	106
Safety in God,	252
Saints, the, forsaken not,	165
Salvation cometh of the Lord,	235
Salvation in Christ,	308
Search the Scriptures,	180
Search me and know my heart,	215
Seeking God,	196
Seeking mercy,	149
Seeking rest in Christ,	257
Self-righteousness is sin,	329
Self-righteousness, the evil of,	7
Self-examination,	268
Salvation of God, waiting for the,	10
Sanctification,	17, 189, 317
Saving knowledge,	75
Shepherd, the Lord is my,	50, 145
Simple-heartedness,	49
Sin is a burden,	347
Sin destroyed in Christ,	24
Sin, godly sorrow for,	41
Sin, indwelling,	43
Sin, to be resisted,	47
Sin is a reproach,	73
Sin is the transgression of the law,	225
Sincerity,	251
Sowing in tears,	99
Spirit, the sealing of the,	117
Spiritually dead, being,	150
Spiritual pride,	223
Spirit, the, is our evidence,	283
Strength in God,	128
Strength, the Lord giveth,	328
Strive for the crown of righteousness,	229
Strive lawfully,	237
Strive against sin,	292
Submission to the will of God,	54
Swear not at all,	174
Take heed to your spirit,	222
Talents, parable of the,	285
Talents, are to be improved,	87

	PAGE
Teach me thy way,	130, 216
Temptations, the use of,	46
Teach me thy paths,	134
Temptation, lead us not into,	101
Temptation, the danger of yielding to,	161
Temptation, wrestling with,	164
Temptation to be resisted,	307
Thou hast a little strength,	238
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,	355
Thy word is truth,	297
Time is short,	72
Tongue, bridle the,	181, 187
Treasure, lay up, in heaven,	318
Trinity, the,	40
Trial, the, of Abraham's faith,	112
Trials and comforts,	186
Trials purify the soul,	243
Trusting in Christ,	343
Turn your eyes from vanity,	278
Unity of spirit,	20
Unskilful in righteousness,	88
Waiting for the Lord,	151
Wait upon God,	192
Walk circumspectly,	220
Walking with God,	359
Walking in darkness,	209
War a good warfare,	330
Washed in Christ, ye are,	66, 241
Watchfulness in duty,	21
Watchfulness against sin,	22
Watch and be ready,	249, 288
Watch and pray,	349
Way, the broad and narrow,	62
Weak, the, assisted by God,	357
What think ye of Christ?	258
What must I do to be saved?	272
What dost thou here, Elijah?	338
Whatsoever ye shall ask, I will do,	333
Where shall I find rest?	295
Wisdom, the, of the world, is folly,	253
Word of God, duty of keeping the,	9
Word of God, the,	202
Work out your own salvation,	217
World, love not the,	245
Worldly pleasures pass away,	37
Worthy is the Lamb,	34, 322
Ye are the epistles of Christ,	265
Yield not to sin,	334



HOSANNA! Mark xi. 9; Ps. cxviii. 25–29.

A NEW scene of time now begins: put up thy Hosanna, O my soul, that the Lord may save, bless, and prosper thee: may he grant thee a happy new year indeed! For this purpose begin it with a dedication of thyself to God; thy time, circumstances, and life are in his hand; with faith and love implore his blessing and protection over thee this ensuing year. Begin this and every following day with prayer; let God have thy first thoughts in the morning, the impression they make will not be easily erased by worldly matters. Grace is promised in the use of means; be thou diligent, then, and punctual in the performance of them. Let thy daily request be for an increasing knowledge of thyself, and of Jesus Christ in his offices; for a sense of pardoning mercy; for a lively, vigorous faith; for communion with the Father and the Son through the Spirit; for true holiness in heart and life; for strength and protection against thy spiritual foes, and for persevering grace to hold out to the end. Pray for the prosperity of Zion; they prosper that love her. O pray for thy friends and relations, begging the Almighty to take them into covenant relation to himself; for a blessing on thy worldly affairs; for a sanctified use of ealth or sickness, prosperity or adversity, as God iall please to send. Perhaps, O my soul, this may the last year of the Lord's patience and thy pilimage. Is thy state safe? Art thou a real believer Jesus? Is the oil of grace in thy vessel? If so, u art prepared for every emergency.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction! Hos. xiii. 14. *Christ, having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it* (his cross). Col. ii. 15. *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

THE world is afraid of a hidden poison where there is none. The real hidden poison is sin, which the Lord grant me to fear everywhere, for it has infected all things and all places. But, O my dear Saviour, thou being my all-sufficient preservative and antidote in all places, O dwell in me continually, and increase thou my faith, that I may know thee and enjoy thee more and more! Take away all slavish fears of death and hell from my soul, for thou hast conquered both for me. And O give me the heart that can live on thee by faith every moment, and that can trust thy grace for every blessing. O give me the heart that burns with love to thee, and that can raise its Hosanna in full assurance of the blessed inheritance beyond the grave.

Hosanna to the Prince of Light,
That clothed himself in clay,
Enter'd the iron gates of death,
And tore the bars away.

Death is no more the King of Dread,
Since our Immanuel rose;
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And spoil'd our hellish foes.

But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand. Isa. lxiv. 8; Dan. iv. 35.

BEING only clay in thy hands, O Lord, as I must not, so I would not, resist thy workings by any means; and I pray and hope thou wilt prepare and perfect me for a meet vessel of grace, in spite of a thousand hindrances. No work of thine ever comes short of its intended perfection; for who can stay thy hand? It is thy own saying, "I will work, and who shall let it?" Isaiah xliii. 13.

An artist delights in his own workmanship, and would not leave one single flaw or defect in it designedly. Phil. i. 6. O, then, look upon me too, thou wise Creator, see how flesh and blood disorder my poor soul, and deliver me from all that may endanger my spiritual life! Knowing thou canst do no less than a human artist, who is ever ready, and exerts all his skill to mend and perfect his work, I trust that thou wilt not always suffer these impediments to hinder and disgrace thy work. Nay, such is thy wisdom and power, that out of darkness thou canst bring light; out of sickness, health; and though I am now destitute of strength and life, yet I believe thy work will be finished at last, and glorify the name of its maker. 1 Pet. v. 10.

Finish, Lord, thy new creation!
Pure, unspotted may we be.
Let us see our whole salvation
Perfectly secured by thee.

David's Prayer. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* Ps. xiv. 7.

Divine Answer. *If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* John viii. 36. See also verses 31, 32.

NOT as if sin should be utterly destroyed, or entirely dead, and could not stir any more in the heart of believers; for the Scripture speaks of them as having still the lusts and motions of sin, Gal. v. 17; but it imports only that it has no power either to condemn or to reign over us; nay, it shall be weakened more and more, Rom. vi. 12, 14; so that Christ reigns in the heart even where sin dwells, in the midst of his enemies; and it is a dangerous error indeed to believe that sin is destroyed in the root. If it were so, whence those frequent expressions and exhortations to crucify, withstand, and rule over it? Gal. v. 24.

Now sits our Saviour on his throne,
With pity in his eyes;
He hears the dying prisoners' groan,
And listens to their sighs!

He frees the souls condemned to death;
And when his saints complain,
No man shall say that praying breath
Was ever spent in vain.

This shall be known when we are dead,
And left on long record,
That ages yet unborn may read,
And trust and praise the Lord!

All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. iii. 12. *The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world.* John xvii. 14.

THE children of God do not love and please the world, and are oftentimes greatly afflicted on account of abounding wickedness, and particularly the profanation of the Lord's name. Now, when you can love the world, and the world can love you, there must be much worldliness in you; for the world loves its own.

Many pretend to be Christians, but they will not endure persecution. Instead of this, they blame others for too much rashness, and not acting prudently enough to avoid the mockings and hatred of the world. Therefore, they propose to take wiser measures; and, in order to do more good, take great care not to be despised and rejected; but, under this pretence of wisdom and prudence, very often lie concealed a dangerous love of the world and fear of man. Be thou nobler-minded, live as a Christian indeed, and be not ashamed to bear the cross of Christ. "The disciple is not above his master." Has eternal love, wisdom, and power endured the contradiction and reproach of sinners? Thou shouldst be wiser than he indeed, if thou couldst escape the reproach and hatred of the world.

May but his grace my soul renew;
Let sinners gaze and hate me too!
The word that saves me does engage
A sure defence from all their rage.

All things are possible to him that believeth. Mark ix. 23.

FAITH is the principal thing in the Christian religion. It is the spiritual eye, enlightening the mind, directing the feet, and cheering the heart: the whole turns upon it. As our faith is, so is our strength and fruitfulness in good works; but at the same time there is nothing more out of our own power than to believe, even after the work of grace has been actually wrought in our hearts: therefore, nothing is more needful than to pray for faith as long as we live. May the Lord give and increase it continually! Nothing can be stronger in the universe than the hand of faith. By this we lay sure hold on our most glorious and almighty Lord in heaven, and such an inviolable union is established between Christ and a believing soul, that none can separate the one from the other; all the powers of hell and sin avail nothing against it! Faith breaks through the greatest obstacles, removes mountains of difficulties, and has, as it were, a kind of omnipotence in it; "for this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v. 4. Nay, it even wrestles with God and prevails. Gen. xxxii. 28. As straw cannot withstand the force of fire, so, God being a wall of fire around his people, the greatest power of our mighty enemies shall be consumed like the stubble. O, then, look upon him steadfastly, my soul, and believe in him with a simple heart! Wondrous are his ways with his people, and past finding out; but at last all their sorrows and strife must come to a triumphant end.

Christ is all, and in all. Col. iii. 11; Eph. i. 23; Eph. iv. 9, 10.

ALL mankind are Christ's creatures. All conditions are disposed and regulated by his providence. He alone is the source whence all have proceeded, and to him alone all must return. For a believer to receive and know Christ as his All, is the only means to live truly a life of faith; and when he has done this, it will not be hard to resign all other things. To talk much of Christ, and make frequent use of his name one to another, is commendable, if the heart goes along with the words; but to call upon God the Father with a filial confidence, is also our duty, and does not contradict the Apostle's meaning at all, for it is only through Christ we can do it; and, as he says himself, the Father and he are one. Thou art my All, O gracious Lord!—what, then, can I want? I desire no more than to be put always in mind of this by the animating voice of thy Spirit.

Let sinners boast of kindred joys,
The poor delights of sense,
'Tis Christ our inmost thought employs—
We draw our comforts thence.

With sweet contentment now we bid
Farewell to pleasures here;
With Christ in God our life is hid,
And all its springs are there.

'Tis now concealed and lodged secure,
In God's eternal Son;
From age to age shall it endure,
Though to the world unknown.

They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.—Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Rom. x. 3, 11.

THE same mistake which proved so fatal to the Jews, proves equally fatal to many who pretend to call themselves *Christians*. Ignorant alike of the divine character and their own, they build their hope of the favour of God and eternal life upon some works of righteousness which they have done, or intend to do, and reject the righteousness of Christ, in which alone they can be justified and accepted, forgetting this great doctrine of the gospel, that salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us; by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus iii. 5. In this mistake the decent and the profane are equally involved; for the worst of mankind fancy themselves possessed of some virtues and good qualities that will entitle them to the divine favour. The delusion remains till the light of the Holy Ghost darts in, like a sunbeam, upon the mind, and discovers the guilt and pollution that defile the best of us. We then abhor ourselves, and look to the free grace of God in Christ Jesus for pardon and salvation. We have a hope that maketh not ashamed!

Jesus! in thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

h my whole heart, Hear me, O Lord, I will keep thy Great peace have they who love thy law; and hall offend them. I have kept thy precepts and thy tes; for all my ways are before thee. I have gone he a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget mandments. Ps. cxix. 145, 165, 168, 176. *The ll preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy* s. cxxi. 7.

vord of God should be ever connected with yer; for why is it that many hear and read eing the better? They do not pray in faith sing. We must, like David, pray with the ervour, that we may understand and retain of God, and bring forth fruit; for a Chris- nothing so much at heart as that he may act up to the word and will of God; his , Lord, let my footsteps be sure, according ord; and let nothing contrary to thy law minion over me, either in my doctrine or ! If this prayer be granted, great will be e; Jesus himself will be our peace, and then shall offend us; we shall take heed unto all s before God, and so walk before him as to humble, like David, who considered himself ring and lost sheep. Lord, we are by nature and lost sheep; seek and fetch us back from of our ways, and preserve us in thy pasture ! all we with a heart full of gratitude shew praises of thy glorious name.

My soul has gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip;
Yet since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wandering sheep.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. Gen. xlix. 18.

MANY have received comfort from these words in death, and waited in faith for their salvation. The thoughtless and impenitent wait only for temporal prosperity in their lives, and therefore cannot expect eternal bliss, but, on the contrary, a dreadful judgment after death. O that they would enter into themselves this very day, that, at the eve of life, they might, like Jacob and Simeon, depart in peace. We will not, therefore, look for any earthly things, but for the Saviour, who is already come, who will grant us his salvation, his aid and deliverance in life and death, and will conduct us safely at last, though we should wait some time for his help. Yes, my Redeemer, they who wait, depend upon, and hope in thee, shall not be ashamed. Grant us only faith and patience, that we may wait on thee from one morning-watch to another; and enduring all things, make the whole course of our lives one perpetual expectation of thy aid; and may we ever abundantly experience thy help and salvation, especially at our latter end.

Christ's own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye;
And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,
And death itself shall die.

How long, dear Saviour, O how long
Shall this bright hour delay?
Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of Time,
And bring the welcome day.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned. John iii. 16–18.

OH that these truly precious words were ever warmly impressed on our hearts! that they were our last thoughts at night, and the first at our waking in the morning; and that they were improved in such a manner, as to make our dying bed easy in the evening of our life, and to ensure our rising with gladness in the morning of the resurrection! And what more blessed and delightful meditations can I daily dwell upon than to think thus:—God has loved me, even me, when I was his enemy; and so loved me that he gave me his only Son! Bless me with faith in Christ, then Christ is mine, and all things are mine, Cor. iii. 21; for he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Rom. viii. 32. He will never suffer a believing soul to perish; he has passed his word for it. It is he that says, "I shall not perish; I shall not be condemned," but have everlasting life if I believe. This will I build and depend upon to my last moments, as upon an immovable rock. Amen and Amen.

O, for this love let earth and skies
With hallelujahs ring!
And the full choir of human tongues
All hallelujahs sing!

In Christ we have redemption through his blood, even th giveness of sins. Col. i. 14. *Having forgiven you all passes. Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances was against us, which was contrary to us, and took of the way, nailing it to his cross.* Col. ii. 13, 14. *T fore he said, It is finished.* John xix. 30.

HAST thou, O my soul, felt the weight of thy guilt and misery, and been enabled, in re and truth, to lay hold by faith of the blood of C for thy redemption, and faithfully to devote thys him in heart and life? Then hast thou a sure fou tion to go upon. Let it be thy constant care fi to depend upon these and such like blessed dec tions; look to Jesus for every blessing thou sta in need of. Has Christ brought life and immort to light? then look unto him and live. Is redemption through his blood, even the forgiv of sins? then throw all thy guilt upon his atoner Has he blotted out the handwriting of ordin that was against thee? then shake off self-righ dependencies, and legal fears also. Did he di thy sins? then let his goodness and love lead to unfeigned repentance; let the sense of thy break thine heart, but encourage thy hope in gospel.

'Tis finish'd—was his latest voice;
These sacred accents o'er,
He bow'd his head, gave up the ghost,
And suffered pain no more.

'Tis finish'd—The Messiah dies
For sins, but not his own;
The great redemption is complete,
And Satan's power o'erthrown.

David's Prayer. *Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings.* Ps. xvii. 8.
Divine Answer. *He shall cover thee with his feathers; and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.* Ps. xci. 4.

THERE is none, O Lord, that has more need continually to keep close to thee in prayer and faith, and at the same time none is more unable to do it, than I, the least of all thy flock! Oh, that thou wouldst be graciously pleased to incline and enable me to pursue this blessed work! and grant that thy good Spirit, according to his own pleasure, may never suffer me to be faint and backward in the same! Whilst I truly rest my faith under the wings of thy grace, I am sure of defence, power, and comfort; but as soon as I wander from thee, I am in danger of losing the comfortable sense of these privileges, and falling into various errors and perplexities. "Guide me, O Lord, by thy counsel in this world, and at last receive me into glory! Amen." Ps. lxxiii. 24.

He that has made his refuge God
Shall find a most secure abode;
Shall walk all day beneath his shade,
And there at night shall rest his head.

Just as a hen protects her brood,
From birds of prey that seek their blood,
Under her feathers, so the Lord
Makes his own arm his people's guard.

Thrice happy man! thy Maker's care
Shall keep thee from the fowler's snare,
Satan, the fowler, who betrays
Unguarded souls a thousand ways.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matt. iv. 17; iii. 2. *Rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.* Joel ii. 13.

THE kingdom of heaven appertains to those who repent; and the first mark of repentance is poverty of spirit; whence Jesus saith, Matt. v. 3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." John preached repentance; Jesus preaches it here, and so did his apostles afterwards. This true repentance is necessary for all; and the beginning of it is to acknowledge ourselves poor miserable sinners, depraved by nature, and totally void of any righteousness or worth of our own, to confess our nakedness, to drop all the fig-leaves of vain excuses and false comforts, to lay open our poverty and wants before God, to accuse ourselves, and plead guilty of all our sins, but seek mercy from Christ. If we do this, we are blessed, and the kingdom of heaven is ours. This poverty of spirit is both the first and last foundation laid in the heart; for the faithful are more and more grounded in poverty of spirit the nearer they approach to their consummation. "I dwell, saith he, whose name is holy, with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. lvii. 15.

Pure are the joys above the sky,
And all the region peace;
No wanton lips, nor envious eye,
Can see or taste the bliss.

ray without ceasing. 1 Thes. v. 17. *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* Luke xviii. 1. *Continuing instant in prayer.* Rom. xii. 12.

'F we have not got grace enough, it is because we : do not pray enough; for most true it is, we need ot strive to move God to compassion, and extort, as : were, the blessings from him by our prayers which e has promised. Very far from it. He is every inute communicating himself to us; in every word e holds forth Christ and every good thing to us; ut we must always have a soul hungering after hrist, and by incessant prayer stretch out the hand f faith to receive him. This is chiefly to be under- tood of the inward desires and groanings of our pirit; but we must not omit to pour out our suppli- ations daily, as often as we can, by words, else our ecret mental prayers at last may become so secret as o cease perhaps entirely. We must always remember hat we are dependent on God for every good; with- ut him we can do nothing. Let us feel that depend- nce at all times, and we shall always be in the spirit f prayer. Nor let us cease praying till we have re- eived a full answer to our prayers. "Ye people, our out your hearts before him; God is a refuge for s." Ps. lxii. 8.

Holy Father, lend an ear
Whilst I sue in Jesu's name;
Surely, thou wilt kindly hear,
Since I bring no human claim;
Let me for adoption stay,
Only give me power to pray.

Abide in me. John xv. 4. *Lord, to whom shall we go?—thou hast the words of eternal life.* John vi. 68. *It is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God.* Ps. lxxiii. 28.

TO abide in Christ, who is our righteousness and strength, and not to be moved from him, is the very life and power of Christianity; we do this when our thoughts are going out after him, our hearts cleaving to him, and our minds stayed upon him. Now, to know Christ, and thus to abide in him as our righteousness, brings peace and joy; which joy in the Lord is certainly followed with strength to overcome sin and the world, which believers renounce the more readily, as they have found something better in Christ. May the Lord give me grace likewise immovably to abide in him! May he strengthen me with might in the inner man, even with the might of the Holy Spirit, that I may not only abide in Christ while here, but may abide with him for evermore in the New Jerusalem which is above.

Christ is my light, my life, my care,
My blessed hope, my heavnly prize;
Dearer than all my passions are,
My limbs, my bowels, or my eyes!

The strings that twine about my heart,
Tortures and racks may tear them off;
But they can never, never part,
With their dear hold of Christ my love.

My God, and can a humble child,
That loves thee with a flame so high,
Be ever from thy face exil'd,
Without the pity of thine eye?

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal. iii. 13, 14.

THE spirit of sanctification is the gift of Christ. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ." 1 Peter i. 2. Consequently, there is a great difference between moral actions done by our own strength and true sanctification of the spirit. The latter cannot take place before the soul truly receives Christ, and abides in him as its only propitiation, righteousness, and peace; for he, being first made to us of God our righteousness, will then be made our sanctification likewise (1 Cor. i. 30), and the kingdom, work, and image of God will go on best when we trust least to our own strength. Sanctification is now become a more easy task, since Christ lives and works in us, and we in a child-like temper live henceforth to him who died for us. Let me always be as a little child, as a new-born babe, with a heart hungry for the sincere milk of the word of God, without malice, without guile, without hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

The law commands and makes us know
What duties to our God we owe;
But 'tis the gospel must reveal
Where lies the strength to do his will.

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4. See Rom. viii. 1–17.

WHERE the law ends, Christ begins. The law ends with representative sacrifices; Christ begins with the real offering. The law is our schoolmaster to lead us unto Christ; it cannot save us, but it lays us at his door, where alone salvation is to be found. Gal. iii. 24. The law calls for a perfect righteousness, which in ourselves never will be found; but all its demands were fulfilled by our surety. Every true believer finds that righteousness in Christ which he stands in need of; and is enabled, through the Spirit, to rest upon it for justification; he faithfully endeavours to obey the law, as the great rule of his duty both to God and man; yet is so sensible of his own manifold defects, that he would utterly despair if he could not look up unto Jesus, and say, "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord, my God."

Lord, when my thoughts with wonder roll
O'er the sharp sorrows of thy soul,
And read my Maker's broken laws
Repair'd and honoured by thy cross;

When I behold death, hell, and sin,
Vanquish'd by that dear blood of thine;
And see the Man that groan'd and died;
Sit glorious by his Father's side;

My passions rise and soar above;
I'm wing'd with faith and fired with love;
Fain would I reach eternal things.
And learn the notes that Gabriel sings.

But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto Noah into the ark. Then he put forth his hand and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. Gen. viii. 9.

THAT dove-like spirit communicated to the soul in regeneration, can find no rest for the sole of its foot, until it brings us to Jesus, who is the great ark of the covenant. Many, on their first awakening from sin, apply themselves to very hard works and rigorous duties, thereby expecting to find rest for their wounded consciences. But though the right and diligent use of all the means of grace is absolutely required, yet great care must be taken not to quiet ourselves by that only. We should not place any confidence at all in our own doings, but only look for rest through the blood of Christ. To be found in him justified and accepted would soon fill our hearts with peace, nay, encourage and enable us to do good works. And in the doing of good we must always cherish a meek and grateful spirit, knowing that all is of the infinite grace of God.

In vain the trembling conscience seeks
 Some solid ground for rest;
With long despair the spirit breaks,
 Till we apply to Christ.

Just as we see the lonesome dove
 Bemoan her widowed state,
Wand'ring she flies thro' all the grove,
 And mourns her loving mate:

Just so our thoughts from thing to thing
 In restless circles rove;
Just so we droop and hang the wing,
 When Jesus hides his love

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John xiii. 35. *Forbearing one another in love. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.* Eph. iv. 2, 3, 26, 32.

EVERY member of the mystical body of Christ should labour for the comfort and edification of the whole, and the honour of the Head. He that would live a quiet life and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, must be as backward to take offence as to give it. He must live in love, and full of love. Humble Christians never affect singularity, or pretend to have the preference one of another; they rather study to be of one mind, and strive not about words, lest the general harmony subsisting between them and the edification of souls should be hindered. Whoever judges and blames everything, and can never agree in words and notions, or join in devotion with other experienced Christians, is puffed up with self-conceit, and is in the way to make a dangerous shipwreck. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Not diff'rent food, or diff'rent dress,
Compose the kingdom of our Lord;
But peace, and joy, and righteousness,
Faith, and obedience to his word.

When weaker Christians we despise,
We do the gospel mighty wrong;
For God, the gracious and the wise,
Receives the feeble with the strong!

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
Matt. xxv. 5.

O THAT I may be roused out of my slumber, and be watchful and ready against the coming of my Bridegroom! How many are there that set out in good earnest in their way to heaven, and run well for some time, but at last are lulled to rest, and are entangled again with a false notion of liberty! Even the wise virgins fell asleep. Let this be a warning to me, O Lord! Set thou a guard before my eyes, ears, and other faculties, lest the world should again enter through these avenues of the heart. If the spark be not speedily extinguished, it will soon break out into a flame; thus sin is of a progressive nature, and its venom spreads very quickly and very wide, unless it be stopped and opposed in time. Watch therefore over this unsteady heart of mine, O thou Keeper of Israel; that as soon as it begins to wander from thee, I may be alarmed to flee from sin as from a serpent. Give me grace to look upon every hour as my last, so that, being ever wisely upon my guard, I may meet thee with joy when my time is run out, whenever it shall please thee to call me hence. And let my going out and my coming in be guided by thy Spirit, so that every day may bring me nearer to thyself.

The fearful soul that tires and faints,
And walks the ways of God no more,
Though number'd once among the saints,
Now makes his own destruction sure.

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. Matt. xiii. 25.

NO wonder that Christians lose their power and strength, if the enemy of souls finds them asleep. How soon may he gain an advantage from without, if a strict guard is not kept within! Though Satan seems to sleep sometimes, and we should by all appearance be in no great danger, it is only his stratagem to make us careless. He never fails to be vigilant, and watch his opportunity, that he may offer us battle with advantage; and who knows but he may gain the victory by those very sins to which perhaps we, for many years, had hardly any temptation? O! how cunningly does he work! how enticing is the world! Even in lawful things, very often, the most dangerous snares lie hidden. A single word that we hear may be able to disturb our peace. One unguarded look is sometimes enough to infatuate our hearts. There is danger on all sides. Unless the Lord open our eyes, and preserve us on all occasions, each of us, even the best, may still be overcome and be deadly hurt by sin and the world. Satan is particularly busy to sift the godly most of all; and having caught them in his net, triumphs exceedingly over them.—O Lord, suffer me never to fall asleep again!

Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely!
And let me ne'er my trust betray,
Lest I for ever die!

y afflicted them, the more they multiplied and
' the children of Israel sighed by reason of the
t they cried; and their cry came up to God, by
r bondage. And God looked upon the children of
! God had respect unto them. Exod. i. 12, and ii.

re we are oppressed by our spiritual
mporal enemies, the more will the king-
increase in and through us. And when
dangers oppress us most, God hastens to
makes our necessity itself the means of
or the ways of God are always wonderful.
ttreme distress when the children of the
re cast into the river; but this was the
eserving Moses, their intended deliverer.
s came, they were not relieved imme-
their calamities increased. This is God's
ut they cried the more to God, and he re-
by signs and wonders. After this, their
greater than ever at the Red Sea; for
is shown his glory in assisting us, he can
eater trials. But when they were beset
by distress and death, then came the most
our of all, and their enemies perished in
. Lord, suffer us not to despair in any
ut enable us to believe and experience
ater our distress, the nearer and more
be thy aid, and all our enemies will be
stubble before the devouring flame.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John iv. 10, 19. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* John xiv. 21, 23.

O WHAT a glorious promise! what manner of love is this! Lord, I would not exchange my cross and sufferings, much less thy love, for the love and honours of the world. Only make it more known to me how great thy love is, and how much thou hast forgiven me, that I may love thee much again, and be thereby still better purged from the inordinate love of temporal things. It is my earnest desire that the gates of my heart should be opened to none but thee, that thou alone mayest dwell in me. Shed thy love abroad in my heart, quicken and renew all the faculties of my mind and body, and work everything in and for me, that thy love may be my life, and the keeping of thy law my joy.

Love divine, all loves excelling;
Joy of heaven to earth come down;
Fix us in thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.

O! for this love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit,
Let us find thy promised rest.

Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 2 Cor. v. 9.

THIS indeed is the true disposition of a soul espoused to Christ. She has but one care, which is to please him in all things. And this desire to do his will is, as it were, the ring and seal of her Bridegroom; which she may look upon, even in the absence of all spiritual joy, as a token for good that she is his spouse. Ought not then this day, O my soul, to be a new wedding-day with Christ? He is desirous that thou shouldest be betrothed unto him even now, and waits only for thy consent. Hearken, O daughter! consider, and incline thine ear; be no longer married to the world. Forget thine own people and thy father's house, and take him alone for thy husband; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty. Wilt thou give the refusal to this glorious and loving Saviour? I hope not. Give it rather to the world, and resolutely say, I have done with thee, O poor world! I break the bonds of my former love; my eyes and feet shall henceforth only be directed to the blessed and eternal city of the new Jerusalem, where my heavenly Bridegroom resides. And O what need I have to be duly prepared, dressed, and beautified against his coming, and the time of his taking me home to himself! Lord Jesus, keep me longing for thine appearance, for the happy day when I shall go with thee to glory.

If Christ is ours, we may despise
All rage, though hell against us rise:
His love experienced will impart
Immortal transport to the heart!

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Heb. iv. 16.

O THAT we were all so wise as to prepare and provide ourselves in due time with the right armour of faith, before the time of need and hour of death approach! Come, my reader, let us begin now, and go directly to the gate of mercy, lest we should come too late and be undone. Behold the encouragement of Christ:—"I am the door," says he, "and the way." John x. 1; chap. xiv. 6. Now, by this door you may find the entrance into the heart and favour of God, Christ himself sitting on the mercy-seat, to receive and welcome the vilest of sinners. And there is no drawing near to God but through him, and clothed in the righteousness of our only Redeemer, Mediator, and Advocate. He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End; nay, the very All in All to believers. With Christ they can never part, and he can never part with them. Col. iii. 10, 11.

Of him who did salvation bring,
I could for ever think and sing!
Arise, ye guilty, he'll forgive!
Arise, ye poor, he will relieve!

Ask but his grace, and lo! 'tis given:
Ask, and he turns your hell to heaven;
Though sin and sorrow wound my soul,
Jesus, thy balm can make it whole!

Guide thou, O Lord, guide thou my course,
And draw me on with thy sweet force!
Still make me walk, still make me tend,
By thee my way, to God my end!

God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him: for, if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Rom. v. 8–10.

HERE we have much more reason to cry out than Moses had. "The Lord loved the people:" Deut. xxxiii. 3; but here I must beseech thee too, O Lord, that the infinite gift of thy Son may appear to me greater and greater every day; and that thy love, shining out in his redemption, may go on so to increase in my soul, as to disperse all clouds of darkness, unbelief, and hard thoughts of thy goodness. Whenever this slanderous spirit tries to lift up its head, grant that my faith and love may be quickened and strengthened in such a manner, as heartily to praise thy great love, in spite of all its suggestions: this is the chief desire which I offer unto thee in all my prayers, night and day. The want of faith and love, I am sensible, is still my greatest want; my soul is like a large empty vessel, but I pray thee to fill it speedily, notwithstanding any opposition that may be made by my unrenewed part.

Come, guilty souls, and flee away
Like doves to Jesu's wounds:
This is the welcome gospel-day,
Wherein free grace abounds.

God loved the world, and gave his Son,
To drink the cup of wrath;
And Jesus says, he'll cast out none
That come to him by faith.

For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

TO believe in Christ for justification is but one half of the duty of faith: it respects Christ only as he died and suffered for us, as he made atonement for our sins, peace with God, and reconciliation for us, and as our righteousness; unto these ends, he is, indeed, primarily and principally proposed unto us in the gospel; and with respect unto them, we are exhorted to receive him and to believe in him; but this is not all that is required of us: Christ in the gospel is proposed unto us as our pattern and example of holiness; and as it is a cursed imagination that the whole end of his life and death was to exemplify and confirm the doctrine of holiness, which he preached, so to neglect his being our example in considering him by faith unto that end, and labouring after conformity to him, is evil and pernicious; wherefore, let us be much in contemplation of what he was, what he did, how in all instances of duties and trials he carried himself, until a glorious image of his perfect holiness is implanted in our minds, and we are made like unto him thereby. And let us always bear in mind, that ye were called to a state of suffering when ye were called to be Christians, for the world cannot endure the yoke of Christ.

O let me walk with Christ below,
His holy footsteps trace,
And daily taking up his cross,
Be nourished by his grace.

The Gospel is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. Rom. xvi. 26.

THE obedience of faith here spoken of is the same thing as believing the report of the gospel, Rom. x. 16; a hearty submission to the righteousness of God, even to Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. This is the obedience of faith, strictly speaking, by which we give glory to God, take full shame to ourselves, renounce all that nature is proud of, and are brought to rest for our justification and acceptance with God on that alone which has satisfied his law and justice. However lightly we may be disposed to pass over this, it is a high point of obedience, not easily brought about in such a creature as man, and needing an effectual light and energy from above. It is taught purely from above; and he who would learn it, must seek it by much prayer continually; for in vain shall we strive to obey God in other things, until we learn to obey him in this. Careless reader, see to it that you learn your need of Christ! Awakened and distressed sinner, seek not to heal yourself by a forced obedience; learn the obedience of faith, that you may be purged in your conscience from dead works to serve God. Self-despairing sinner, obey the gospel-call of God to your soul, and live. Believer, let your fruit be to holiness.

Within us, Lord, thy Spirit place,
Conveying health, and peace, and power,
And let us daily grow in grace,
That we may love and serve thee more.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28.

THIS is a free invitation to every weary and heavy-laden sinner, made by him who alone is able to take away the load and guilt of sin. Every person under the pressure of sin, not only may, but must come to Jesus, thus laden with guilt, if he hope to succeed for pardon! While we endeavour to prepare our way by holy qualifications, we rather fill it with stumbling-blocks, whereby our souls are hindered from attaining to the salvation of Christ! Christ would have us to believe on him who justifies the ungodly, and therefore he doth not require us to be godly before we believe: he came as a physician for the sick, and doth not expect they should recover their health in the least degree before they come to him. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design, which is to show forth the exceeding riches of his grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us freely. Eph. ii. 5, 9. It is no affront to Christ, or slighting or contemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to God while we are polluted sinners; but rather it is an affronting and contemning the saving grace, merit, and fulness of Jesus, if we endeavour to make ourselves righteous and holy before we receive Christ himself, and all holiness and righteousness in him by faith.

How long the time since Christ began
To call in vain on me!
Deaf to his warning voice, I ran
Through paths of vanity.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

BLESSED are they to whom the gospel has made known the unsearchable riches of Christ! He is that one pearl of great price, in comparison of whom all other goodly things that men desire are worthless. Without him we are poor and miserable, though we abound in all manner of worldly store; but if we have found him, and discovered the excellency of his name, we are in possession of a treasure that makes us rich indeed, and have reason to be content with our portion, though stript of every earthly comfort; for the Father gives grace and glory, even eternal life, in his Son Jesus Christ; and he that hath the Son of God hath life. O my soul! thou, like the merchantman, hast been seeking goodly pearls, and eagerly looking here and there for happiness all thy days! Hast thou at length been enlightened to perceive where true joys are to be found? then wilt thou be willing to sell all in order to win Christ, and be found in him: if there is anything that thou art unwilling to part with for his sake, thou knowest not his value, thou art not worthy of him!

Long did my soul in Jesus' form
No comeliness or beauty see;
His sacred name, by others prized,
Was tasteless still, and dead to me.

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

WITHOUT this saving knowledge, we have no God, no Christ, no grace, no faith, no union with Christ, no actual justification, pardon of sin, peace, or eternal life. But whoever has found Christ, the pearl of great price, the treasure hid, has found matter of great rejoicing: for he was poor before, and this treasure enricheth him; he was naked before, but finding this treasure, he is gloriously clothed; he was forced before to feed upon husks, but now he feeds on the bread of life; he was far in debt before, but now he sees the debt is paid, that he is justified from all things, and pardoned for ever; he saw he was a child of wrath before, but now he is become a child of God; that he was a captive, and in chains before, but now he is set at liberty; condemned before, but now he sees there is no condemnation to him, nor to any one that is in Christ Jesus; that he was a fool before, but now he is made wise unto salvation. Reader, canst thou set thy seal to the truth and power of such experience? Then thou art wise indeed; if not, thou hast much to learn. Apply with speed, and remember it is God alone that gives this light and knowledge. Take heed unto the sure word of prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your heart. 2 Peter i. 19.

This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John iii. 23. *For God hath sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him.* Chap. iv. 9.

THE Father breaks forth, as it were, through the whole Scripture in high praises of his Son; he calls out from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Matt. xvii. 5. Nothing, therefore, can be more agreeable to him than to receive this his Son, and to believe his report, John xvi. 27; and on doing this we shall have life; but by omitting it, we look upon him as a liar. Unbelief, therefore, which refuses to accept of this great gift, is, no doubt, the greatest of all sins. O Lord, teach me this, and grant me faith.

Why art thou so backward, O my poor soul, to believe, like the rest of God's children, in Christ? Hast thou not as good a right to do it as they have? Who can dispute with thee this privilege? It is the express will of the Father; nay, he even commands thee to do it. Has he not given his only Son, by an act of inconceivable love, to die for thee, to the very end that thou shouldst live? O what a pleasing thing will it be to him to put thy whole trust upon this his well-beloved Son! This would be the joy of his heart more than anything else: therefore delay no longer to receive what his love has offered thee, but firmly believe that the Father loves thee as well as the Son.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Rev. v. 12. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power.* Rev. iv. 11.

O LORD, how mean and slight notions have I often of thy great power! By these I am discouraged, and thou art robbed of thy praise. Grant, therefore, that, though I would always be duly abased and convinced of my vileness, in such a manner as never to ascribe any good to myself, or think myself worthy of the least thing in the way of merit,—for at the best I am but an unprofitable servant,—yet thy grace and power may at the same time appear to me abundantly greater than all my sins, so that I may have always encouragement enough to believe in and praise thy holy name. And grant that the delusive pleasures of this world may never twine so closely round my heart, that thy glory and thy praise do not always occupy my song.

Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne;
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,
But all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,
"To be exalted thus!"
"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply,
"For he was slain for us!"

Let all that dwell above the sky,
In air, in earth, and seas,
Conspire to lift his glories high,
And speak his endless praise.

ul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips. Ps. lxiii. 5. *lelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us rlad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage the Lamb is come.* Rev. xix. 6, 7.

HAT tends not to thy glory, O Lord, and is not thy own work, whatever appearance it may , is not really good and profitable. Preserve and t me, therefore, to do all things as of thee, in thy , and to thy honour. May my soul be ever mag- ng thy name, O my dear Redeemer and Bride- m, and my whole conversation be directed to thy e! Grant that my heart and mouth may be ever of thy great mercies, and overflow continually thanksgiving; and that in thy worship I may r such a full sensation of spiritual comfort and hat no desire shall be left unsatisfied.

My God, my King, thy various praise
Demands thanksgiving all my days;
Oh, let thy grace employ my tongue
Till death and glory raise the song!

Grant, Lord, that ev'ry hour may bear
Some thankful tribute to thine ear;
And ev'ry setting sun may see
New works of duty done for thee!

Thy faithfulness endures the same;
Thy bounty flows an endless stream;
Thy mercy swift, thine anger slow;
But dreadful to the stubborn foe.

And who can speak thy wondrous deeds?
Thy greatness all our thoughts exceeds.
Vast and unsearchable thy ways!
Vast and immortal be thy praise!

David's Prayer. *Forsake not the works of thine own hands.* Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

Divine Answer. *He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.* Phil. i. 6.

THE right way to grow in grace is to give up thyself wholly to thy Heavenly Father, who knoweth all thy wants, and has engaged to supply them. Then labour diligently to walk with Christ, and carefully cherish the new life, which, be it ever so weak and little now, in comparison to the old man, will increase and gradually outgrow him, as a new skin does the old. May the Lord only give us grace to watch against the opposite extreme, so as never to be lulled into a false rest or a lukewarm spirit, but to be ever diligently and seriously employed in crucifying the flesh, and using all the means of grace; then we need not be anxiously troubled for the growing of the work of God in our souls, for "he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ;" that is, till Christ shall come to call you home to glory in the happy mansions he has prepared above the sky.

My soul lies cleaving to the dust;
Lord, give me life divine;
From vain desires and every lust
Turn off these eyes of mine.

I need the influence of thy grace
To speed me in thy way,
Lest I should loiter in my race,
Or turn my feet astray.

The fashion of this world passeth away. 1 Cor. vii. 31.

AS long as we feed on the husks of the world, and are in love with it, we are neither willing nor able to taste the comforts of the love of God; but when sin and the world are become an abomination to us, and we desire to be rid of them, and seek diligently unto Jesus Christ for the help of his grace and the benefit of his blood, we are then in a right way to receive the love of God and every blessing of salvation; and though we are chastened by the Lord, yet he is not angry with us, but does it to embitter sin and the world more and more to us, and to make us loathe them, that we may not be condemned with the world, but that we may be kept from the evil that is in the world. John xvii. 15.

Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Now I have known the Lord.

As by the light of op'ning day
The stars are all conceal'd,
So earthly pleasures fade away
When Jesus is reveal'd.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me!

Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Matt. vi. 13. *They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power.* Rev. iv. 10, 11.

ONE that is really poor in spirit, though he hath practised the duties of the Christian life ever so long and ever so diligently, always thinks himself to have received but a very little portion of Christ, and the work of sanctification hardly to be begun in his soul. So far is he from believing he has already attained it, that after all his best actions he counts himself not worthy to be called by the name of a grateful son. He is never pleased with himself. No degree of holiness will satisfy his soul. He seeks and finds no rest or comfort but in the infinite mercy of God and in the pardon of his sins by faith; though he does not divide Christ, but receives him in all his offices, and gives himself entirely up to him, without reserve, to be more and more sanctified and perfected; and in this state he is safe indeed, he is prepared for death, and has no reason to be anxiously afraid, though earnestly desirous of higher degrees of sanctification.

For ever hallow'd be thy name
By all beneath the skies;
And may thy kingdom still advance,
Till grace to glory rise.

A grateful homage may we yield,
With hearts resign'd to thee;
And as in heav'n thy will is done,
On earth so let it be.

He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *I have made a covenant with my chosen.* Ps. lxxxix. 3.

THIS was David's plea and confidence when, with eternity full before him, he was just going to make his appearance before an infinitely pure God. This must be our plea also, if ever we would obtain the approbation of our Judge. After a life of the most eminent holiness, the best of men will have reason to cry out, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord!" It is true, indeed, the believer will discover some evidences of grace, just to show the child of God, and no more; but all so imperfect, that he dares not ground his expectations on them. Here the covenant of grace steps in to his relief, wherein he sees ample provision made for the security of his eternal interest; for the covenant is made with Christ and his seed. It is an everlasting covenant, not only made before time, but extending its beneficial effects through the ages of eternity. It is ordered in all things; therefore nothing can be wanting in it, either to promote the glory of God or the salvation of believers. It is sure also; depending on no conditions, requiring nothing but what it gives, conferring its blessings freely, and making them sure to all the seed, being established upon better promises. Happy souls, who are interested in this well-ordered covenant! May it be all my salvation and all my desire!

I pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. John xiv. 16, 17.

WHEN God designed the great and glorious work of recovering fallen man and the saving of sinners, "to the praise of the glory of his grace," he appointed, in his infinite wisdom, two great means thereof; the one was the giving of his Son for them, and the other was the giving of his Spirit unto them. And hereby was way made for the manifestation of the glory of the whole blessed Trinity, which is the utmost end of all the works of God. Hereby were the love, grace, and wisdom of the Father in the design and contrivance of the whole, the love, grace, and condescension of the Son in the execution, purchase, and procurement of grace and salvation for sinners, and the love, grace, and power of the Holy Spirit in the effectual application of all unto the souls of men, made gloriously conspicuous. To these heads may all the promises of God be reduced. Happy for the church that the Spirit is to abide with it for ever! Awful to think that the unconverted world can neither receive nor know the Spirit!

Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
Bringing peace, and bringing love,
Take me, and possess me whole;
Form the Saviour in my soul.

y sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be re-nted of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. Cor. vii. 10.

HERE is a sorrow which has the breach of God's holy law for its object, called *godly*, because it is duced by the Spirit of God discovering the evil of and the plague and corruption of our own hearts, deeply humbling us under a sense of sin, produc- evangelical repentance, and leading the soul to to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon and salvation; Holy Spirit at the same time enabling us to be- e in him, and rest upon his person, blood, and iteousness, for redemption and salvation; which entance will never be repented of. But sorrow, ing from the love of this world, worketh death, th eternal! Lord Jesus, grant me to feel more of ; godly sorrow for sin, and to rejoice more in thee ny Saviour!

Father, thy long-lost child receive;
Saviour, thy purchase own;
Blest Comforter, with peace and joy,
Thy waiting creature own.

Return, my roving heart, return,
And life's vain shadows choose no more;
Seek out some solitude to mourn,
And thy forsaken God implore.

O thou great God, whose piercing eye
Distinctly marks each deep retreat,
In these sequestered hours draw nigh,
And let me here thy presence meet.

Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Ps. xcvii. 11. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness; he is gracious, full of compassion, and righteous.* Ps. cxii. 4. *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, &c. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. x. 35, 37; Isaiah lviii. 10–12.

THIS shows that believers are subject to many changes of joy and sorrow. In a state of gladness, therefore, we have reason to fear; and in the hours of trouble and sadness, to entertain good hopes. Thus we shall always be able to keep the happy medium between the extremes of levity and despair. Before a man has a true sense of his own miseries, the complaints and infirmities of the saints are often a stumbling-block; but afterwards they will administer to him great comfort. This is the reason that God has revealed them in Scripture; for the complaints of his elect children give more comfort than all their most heroic actions. Grant, O Lord, that, whether sorrowing or rejoicing, I may have the light of the Holy Spirit to direct me.

Alas! it swells my sorrows high,
To see my blessed Jesus frown;
My spirit sinks, my comforts die,
And all the springs of life are down.

Yet why, my soul, why these complaints?
Still while he frowns his bowels move;
Still on his heart he bears his saints,
And feels their sorrows in his love.

I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. Rom. vii. 21. *For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* Gal. v. 17.

O MY soul! thou art always striving, yet sin is always stirring: thou fearest the truth of grace, because thou findest the working of sin, but it will be always thus; thou canst not come out of Egypt, but Amalek will lay wait in the way; the flesh will be sure to trouble thee, although it be never able to conquer thee. When one sits down, and is at rest in sin, it is a sign that Satan is there, the strong man, because his kingdom is in peace; but where there is any work of Christ, there will be always war with sin. Sin was the womb of death, and only death must be the tomb of sin. God would have my soul humbled; therefore, though he hath broken my prison, yet he hath left the chain upon my feet. God would have my graces exercised; therefore, though he hath translated me into the kingdom of life, yet he hath left the Canaanite in the land. God would have my faith exercised; therefore Goliath still shows himself in the field, that so I might go out to him "in the name of the Lord." I will betake me to the strength of Christ; and though I cannot help the rebelling power of sin, yet through grace I will labour to prevent the ruling power of it. God grant me of that strength according to my daily need!



God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; for he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 19, 21.

WHAT a glorious statement for the contrite sinner, "God is in Christ"! And how employed? "Reconciling the world unto himself." But how? By "not imputing their trespasses unto them." And how can the justice of God do this? By making "him to be sin for us who knew no sin," and all "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." May not the Christian, then, live at perfect peace? He may. Yet it highly concerns believers who desire to keep a constant peace in their bosoms, to be ever sensible of their spiritual poverty, and to feed and rest wholly on the all-sufficient atonement and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Disquiet of mind and laziness of soul often proceed from self-righteousness and not looking to Christ for everything, but trusting secretly to something in ourselves.

Jesus, thou art my righteousness,
For all my sins were thine.
Thy death has bought of God my peace,
Thy life has made him mine!

For ever here my rest shall be,
Close to thy bleeding side!
'Tis all my hope, and all my plea;
For me the Saviour died!

My dying Saviour and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin:
Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
And cleanse and keep me clean.

Nevertheless I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Ps. lxxiii. 23, 26.

BABES in religion not only long for Christ, but for sensible communion with him; and very often they are indulged with it, that they may be weaned from the world. But those of fuller age, who have their senses more exercised, are thankful they can trust him when they do not see him, and can follow him when they feel no comfort; relying more upon the word and covenant of God than on sweet sensations, which, though ever precious and desirable, are oft withdrawn in times of trouble and temptation. Bestow thy grace, thou blessed Jesus, upon my poor soul, that by faith I may lay hold on thee, and esteem thee as my chief joy, my sure portion, and my exceeding great reward.

How oft have sin and Satan strove
To rend my heart from thee, my God!
But everlasting is thy love,
And Jesus seals it with his blood.

Amidst temptations sharp and strong
My soul to this dear refuge flies;
Hope is my anchor, firm and strong,
While tempests blow and billows rise.

The gospel bears my spirits up;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths, and promises, and blood.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God; God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. Ps. xlvi. 4, 5. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* 1 John iv. 4; Ps. cx. 5; Zech. ii. 5.

TRUE Christians, in a right spirit, still are subject to temptations from within and without; but watching unto prayer, they do not fall by them. On the contrary, as temptations are great helps to discover their hidden infirmities, and stir them up to be more cautious, serious, and faithful, they are followed and rewarded with great and glorious victories. Temptations are not indeed joyous in themselves, but are attended with good fruit and blessed effects in the faithful. Hence St. James bids us count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. What reason have we, then, to be afraid of temptations, since every one carries a new blessing along with it?

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the waters nearer roll,
While the tempest still is high.

Hide me, O my Saviour! hide,
Till the storm of life is past!
Safe into the haven guide!
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, oh! leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me!

Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Rom. vi. 12; James iv. 7.

O MY soul, how awful is thy state by nature and practice! Sin hath gained a dominion over thee; its influence is universal over the soul and body, and over every son and daughter of Adam: it hath brought death on the body, and subjected the soul to everlasting misery; its authority is unjust, and its power cruel and destructive. Lord Jesus, let me adore thine effectual grace, that it hath in any measure delivered me from its power, and assist my poor heart in opposing and rejecting every temptation to obey it in the lusts thereof; let thy precious blood effectually secure me from the guilt of sin in this life and the punishment of it in another! O my soul, if thou art a faithful follower of Jesus, though Satan received a deadly wound when Christ was crucified for us, yet his malice is still the same; thou hast a thousand enemies, and the devil is the leader of them all. O may I, with the deepest humility, look to Jesus, rest upon Jesus, and derive daily strength from him to resist the devil, and, finally, to come off conqueror, and more than conqueror, through him that loved me. Amen.

O that thou wouldst the heavens rend,
In majesty come down,
Stretch out thine arm omnipotent,
And seize me for thine own!

Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. 2 Cor. v. 16. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* John vi. 63.

WHAT is it to know Christ after the flesh? It is to content ourselves with carnal views of his person, character, and kingdom. This was the case with all those who followed him, not on account of his miracles and doctrines, but for the loaves and fishes. Alas! are there not too many who wish to know Christ for carnal, worldly interest, and not that they may be saved from a proud, rebellious heart and an ungodly life! O my soul, let me see to it, that my seeking after Christ may not be carnal, but spiritual; worldly interest is too apt, it may be feared, to influence both private professors and even public preachers. True believers can say, that henceforth this carnal knowledge of Christ is not their pursuit. Where the spirit of Jesus regenerates the heart, and we are brought to a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ, we shall love him, rejoice in him, humbly submit to his will in all things, and daily pray to be more and more like him. O thou dear and precious Jesus, grant that this may be more and more my experience, till I shall know thee in all thy holiness and glory, for ever and ever!

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Ps. cxvi. 6.

HE who walks in godly simplicity and humility, accounting his own infirmities always the greatest, will best be preserved from being puffed up and sifted by the enemy of souls; and, truly, nothing should humble us more than justification by free grace. The more we consider and carefully cherish that, the more this simple, child-like, quiet temper will increase; for since there is nothing in ourselves which can be depended upon, but all must be freely received from Christ, this, at the same time cutting off all vain boasting, brings us low, settles our peace in Christ, who is our All, and is sure enough to be rested upon. It is only from thee, O my dear Saviour, I can learn true simplicity! Teach me, therefore, to turn mine eyes, not upon others, but upon myself. Humble me to the uttermost, and fashion me after thy own mind, that I may be careful to avoid everything that is contrary to love. Keep me, O my Light, from all self-dependence and self-conceit, bridle my carnal reason, and pull down all vain imaginations! Grant that my eye may be fixed only upon that one thing needful which lasts eternally; and that in all my words, deeds, and gestures, I may always resemble the simplicity, innocence, fidelity, and love of a little child. Matt. xviii. 3.

Rich grace, free grace most sweetly calls;
Directly come who will,
Just as you are, for Christ receives
Poor helpless sinners still.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Ps. xxiii. 1. He says it himself: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* John x. 10, 28.

IS the Lord Jesus thy Shepherd? Has he called thee out of the wilderness; called thy heart from the love of sin and the world, and brought thee unto his fold and pastures; brought thee into a close attendance on his ordinances? And does he feed and refresh thy soul with his word? Canst thou distinguish the Shepherd's voice from the voice of an hireling? And does thy heart cleave to the Shepherd in faith and love, adoring his person, and approving his laws, as well as admiring his doctrines? Then fear not, the Lord is with thee; Jesus is thy Shepherd, thou shalt want nothing that is really good. Follow the Shepherd till he bring thee to glory!

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill;
For thou art with me; and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

ting gospel. Rev. xiv. 6. *He upbraideth them unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they be-* Mark xvi. 14.

spel is properly called "Glad Tidings," for reasons. We are polluted with the filth it is opened a fountain for sin and unclean- : way to heaven is blocked up by our sins ; 'a new and living way through the flesh of We are imprisoned debtors by multiplied ons ; it shows that a price, the most ines- is been paid to discharge us. We have by l, stubborn, and impenitent hearts ; in it is t heart of flesh. We can of ourselves do t shows that through Christ we can do all Ve feel that we are liable to err and back- eclares that God will scourge us till we re- , but not take his loving-kindness from us. that we are liable to many calamities ; it . that they shall all work together for our e see that we are dying creatures ; by it we t that we have a forerunner in heaven, and habitation with God in glory. Lord, send l bless this gospel. Make bare thine own and let the people be willing in the day of

O let the world, adoring, see triumphs rought by thee.

Salvation, O Salvation,
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learned Messiah's name.

They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him.
Tit. i. 16; Jude 4; 2 Tim. iii. 5.

THERE is a profession of a special kind, which in its own nature is exposed to reproach in the world, "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." There is a being in Christ, and not living godly; for there are branches in the vine by profession, that bring forth no fruit; men that have not in them the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which torments the men of the earth; but they that will live godly, that is, engage in a profession that shall, on all occasions, and in all instances, manifest the power of it, they shall suffer persecution. We see many every day keep up a profession; but such a profession as will not provoke the world. Now this is to be ashamed of the gospel, to be ashamed of the power and glory of it, to be ashamed of the author of it. No man can put Jesus Christ to greater shame than by professing the gospel without showing the power of it. Phil. iii. 18. Rev. xi. 10. There can be no more vile and sordid hypocrisy, than for any to pretend unto inward habitual sanctification, while their lives are barren in the fruits of righteousness and obedience. Reader, of all dangers in profession, beware of a customary, traditional, or doctrinal owning of gospel truths, without an experimental acquaintance with the reality and efficacy of them; for all such will have their portion where is "wailing and gnashing of teeth!"

I will put enmity between thee and the wom thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy shalt bruise his heel. Gen. iii. 15. See C ii. 14, 15, and Heb. ii. 14.

BY "the seed of the woman" is to Christ the Saviour, not excludi and followers in every age of the wor diction of a Saviour signified to our firs *four* things:—1. That the promised S: to be the man's, but the woman's see virgin; 2. That he was to be a man, l sion, "Thou shalt bruise his heel;" should break the head of the serpent, power and dominion over mankind, ar and all his votaries, with an utter des 4. That in order to our Saviour's doi have his own heel, or human nature, tl of his mediatory person, bruised by t persecuted and put to death by the emissaries. This was the first int saviour that was made to the world; to the serpent, for his immediate confu the presence of our first parents, an sentence was pronounced, to inspire t hope of pardon and life, and with a distinguishing mercy of God, who, nounced so much as any temporal animated them with the hope of eterna

The Lord do, that which seemeth him good. 2 Sam. x. 12.
Thy will be done. Luke xxii. 42.

A CHRISTIAN still feels the motion of self-will, and, consequently, of sin in his heart. And if it be asked, How can Christ and sin dwell together in one heart? the answer is, as a king and rebels in one kingdom or town; he does not agree or correspond with them, but subdues them, and maintains peace. But where self-will has the dominion, there is nothing but trouble and confusion; for unsanctified passions, and a bad conscience, not only are inward torments, but often occasion perplexity and damage in our worldly affairs; whereas, in the blood of Christ, we have a good conscience, abundance of peace, and can be contented and happy in the most indifferent outward circumstances.

Take heed, therefore, O my dear Christian, never to be led by thine own spirit, were it even in such things as seem to bring glory to God, if it is not of his own appointment. Our hearts sometimes are very deceitfully desirous of what pleases ourselves, while we pretend to seek God's glory; and were we not crossed in these our designs, they would prove a great burden to our life. Blessed is he who not only prays with his lips, but is heartily willing also, that nothing but the will of the Lord should be done in everything. It is God alone that understands what may be good or dangerous to our spiritual or temporal circumstances. We being often blinded, or drawn by our lusts, are too much inclined to choose at random what would be perhaps most detrimental.

The Lord will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. Ps. cii. 17. *They looked unto him and were lightened; their faces were not ashamed.* Ps. xxxiv. 5. See also instance of the woman of Canaan, Matt. xv. 21–28; what Christ says, Luke xi. 5–13; xviii. 1–8; likewise of the tossed vessel, Matt. viii. 24–27.

THE load of outward and inward affliction is not always prayed away with a few words, or in a few days. Sometimes it is necessary even to wrestle with God, and be very instant too; how else could faith and patience be exercised? If, therefore, the trials be sharp and lasting, it is not to weaken our faith, but to stir us up to be more instantly zealous in prayer, and the right use of the word of God; and by this means to be so much more gloriously delivered and strengthened in faith; for whatever God sends upon us, it is not for the lessening, but for the increase of our faith. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." James i. 12.

God is our refuge, and our strength,
In straits a present aid;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
We will not be afraid;

Though hills amidst the seas be cast;
Though waters roaring make,
And troubled be; yea, though the hills
By swelling seas do shake.

A river is, whose streams do glad
The city of our God;
The holy place, wherein the Lord
Most high hath his abode.

I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit shall fail before me, and the souls which I have made. Isa. lvii. 15, 16.

HOW sweet are all God's promises, and what a cheering hope do they impart. "I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit." O how consoling are these words to the broken heart and to the wounded spirit, to the spirit wounded on account of sin! How unbounded the joy of the true believer! God doth dwell with him. Yet to insist too much upon the sensible joy of faith, might make weak souls weaker still. Many a sincere Christian's heart is like a bottle with a very narrow passage, which can receive the dew of a heavenly comfort only by little drops. But dost thou feel thyself quite naked, and void of all good? Christ will surely cover thee with the robe of righteousness? Go entirely out of thyself, looking only to him for everything; and whatever gifts of joy, peace, and holiness may be given thee, be very thankful for them; yet trust not in them, but in Christ alone. This will make thee sure, and keep thy heart at rest.

The man who walks with God in truth
 And ev'ry guile disdains,
Who hates to lift oppression's rod,
 And scorns its shameful gains,
His dwelling, midst the strength of rocks,
 Shall ever stand secure;
His Father will provide his bread,
 His water shall be sure.

Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. Ps. xxx. 7. See also civ. 29-31.

SEE, my soul, in this verse, a picture of thine own experience; how much art thou and David alike! When I look up to heaven, how often do I see the sun both shine and set! When I look down into myself, how often do I see my comforts rise and fall! One while I am upon Mount Tabor, and have a glance of heaven; another while I lie in the valley of Bochim weeping, because I have lost sight of my heavenly country. Joshua's long day is many times turned into Paul's sad night. When God would quicken my affections, he gives me a glance of heaven, that so I may be in love with what I see. When I begin to bless myself, and rest in my happy privileges, he draws a veil over the bright vision, that I may rest in nothing but himself, nor loathe what I so greatly love. He suffers my happiness here to be imperfect, that so I may be pressing on to that place where I shall be perfectly happy for ever. Lord, when thou showest thyself, let me love thee; when my mountain stands strong, let me praise thee; when thou withdrawest thyself, let me follow thee; when thy countenance is hid, let me still believe that thou lovest me: under all my changes here, let my soul be always breathing, panting, longing, and reaching after thee, till I shall so perfectly enjoy thee, that I may never lose thee more; but bound up in the bundle of life, when life closes, my soul may wing its way to dwell with thee for ever. Amen.

Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Luke xxii. 31, 32. *Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.* Amos ix. 9. *I will keep thee from the hour of temptation.* Rev. iii. 10.

SOMETIMES we may imagine ourselves to be divinely convinced of the will of God, both by seeming outward providences and inward persuasions of faith; and yet it is possible that the siftings of Satan are at the bottom: however, the Lord will overrule him at last, and order all things to the best for his people. May the Lord make us watchful against our own spirit, and against the evil one, especially when he is transformed into an angel of light, that it may not be in his power to sift us so as to gain an advantage over us, by our listening to his inward suggestions, or yielding to his subtle temptations! And, O my soul, what a precious truth is this for thee, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Remember who he is that prays for thee. It is Christ. Thou hast still the same intercessor, who is now at God's right hand. He has the same merits to plead now that he had when upon earth. Wilt thou despise his prayer? Pause, my soul; hast thou ever asked for this prayer? Thou hast need of it. Turn even now to Christ and plead for it. Plead in earnest and thou shalt get it.

In vain the baffled prince of hell
His cursed projects tries;
We that were doom'd his endless slaves,
Are raised above the skies.

adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, &c.; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. *In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.* Isa. xxx. 15.

CHRISTIAN'S best accoutrements and festival clothes, in which he daily celebrates his sabbath, are called, Col. iii. 10, 12, 14, "The new man, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, and above all charity." These are our true ornaments, and we should seek to be dressed in them. Reader, which dost thou adorn most? thy body or thy soul? O thou meek and lowly Lamb of God, justly I blush before thee, when I consider my impatience, though I am never innocent like thee. I humbly beseech thee to forgive me my transgressions, since thou hast made sufficient atonement for all by thy meritorious silence: but deliver me from this choleric, hot, and peevish temper of mine, and give me grace, in all inward and outward troubles, to have the long-forbearing mind which was in thee! Make me daily more and more like a lamb, that on all occasions, grievous or joyful, I may be composed, and show that excellent heavenly ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, not in many words, but in reality and power. Amen.

Giver of concord, Prince of Peace,
Meek, lamb-like Son of God,
Bid our unruly passions cease,
And quench them with thy blood!

Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none, &c. Luke xiii. 7–9.

THOU fruitless fig-tree, thou barren professor, dost thou hear this, and not tremble? God is come, seeking fruit;—will thy bare profession, thy knowledge of the principles of religion, satisfy the great God? Will the notions of truth in thy head, thy talking and disputing, thy hearing the word preached, thy commending or censuring sermons and preachers, just as thou art in the mood, will this serve thy turn? —and wilt thou thus endeavour to ward off the heart-searching God? Know thou, God is come to seek for fruit, and for good fruit from thee; not the fruit of good words only, but the fruit of good works; not the fruit of talking well, but of walking well, the fruits of holiness in life and conversation:—fruit short of this God will not regard. If thy conscience be awakened, look to thy merciful High Priest; consider well his intercession for such a barren soul as thou art: "Lord, let it alone," &c. Father, let this man live one year longer;—O turn away from this thine anger! I will yet see what may be done: I will take other methods —I will try what corrections may do;—perhaps the rod may work more upon him than my word has hitherto done, and may tend to make his barren heart fruitful; I will also stir up my servants to awaken him in a more sharp and searching manner; and if these new efforts be blessed to him, all shall yet be well, thy grace magnified, and his soul saved; if not, then thou shalt cut him down.

I live by the faith of the Son of God. Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 15; read also 1 Thess. v. 10, and 1 Peter iv. 2.

IN spiritual things we are too often living upon self; we seek in frames, forms, creatures, and animal life, that inward peace and stability of mind which is only to be found in the Redeemer. Outward duties are well in their places; they are to be performed, but not to be trusted in; they are as the scaffold to the building, a mean for carrying on the work, but not the work itself. When favoured with the gracious presence of Jesus, they are blessings; without it, they are nothing. The whole dependence must be on Jesus. He being the way, the truth, and the life, without him, prayers, praises, rites and ordinances, are carcases without a soul. This is the case with every external service that is destitute of the presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit, who alone imparts communion of heart, and a quickening of the soul in faith, and in love to Jesus, and often a delightful view of that which is behind the veil of outward ordinances, such as no carnal eye can behold, a purely spiritual discovery of the Lord in his goodness, beauty, grandeur, and glory. O may the Spirit be poured out on my soul, and by the faith which he imparts may I get a foretaste of the joys of the heavenly state! Amen.

I wish, as faithful Christians do,
Dear Lord, to live to thee;
And by my words and walk to show
That thou hast died for me.

Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; but *narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Matt. vii. 13, 14; read also Luke xiii. 24.

THIS sounds too harsh in the ears of the old man, who would not have the law made use of in these gospel times, either to the converted or unconverted; and yet to the old man, the law, and not the gospel, properly belongs. St. Paul, the great preacher of the gospel, made use of the law to rouse unconverted Felix from his security, Acts xxiv. 25, and to warn the converted Romans from falling into it again. Rom. viii. 13.

Which way dost thou walk? Examine thyself. Is it in the narrow way? Art thou quite sure of it? Venture not to go on any farther at random. It is matter of great consequence; if thou wilt be safe, try better for it; thou mayst easily be deceived. Alas! thou art surely in the broad way to destruction, if thou still lovest and art conformed to the world. Art thou but indifferent with regard to the things of God, relishing more the vanities, pleasures, companies, treasures, and honours of this world?—thou art not in the good narrow way that leads unto life. O consider this well, and stop short before it be too late, and thou drop into the bottomless pit of perdition! Nothing renders this way either narrow or difficult but sin. Leave off thy sin, and thou mayst not only find the way, but abide, walk, and persevere in it till the end.

Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually; and thou shalt put into the breastplate of judgment the Urim and Thummim (namely, light and integrity). Exod. xxviii. 29.

NOW am I, saith the believer, for ever in gracious remembrance with God, since my great high priest and advocate, Christ Jesus, bears my name continually before him on his heart. Whenever I am troubled about my sins, his powerful mediation will surely obtain mercy for all my transgressions, and supply my wants abundantly? God not denying him anything, I can through him continually be heard, and obtain grace; for he makes perpetual intercession for me in heaven, by which all my prayers, at all times, and even now, are sanctified, and presented to the Father, who heareth him always. O who would not send up his petition to heaven in faith? Yet, O my soul, is thy prayer the prayer of faith? Dost thou offer it believing that thou shalt receive, and dost thou with anxious expectation look for the answer? Ah! consider well, dost thou not pray, and then think thy work is done? Prayers without the longing desire are no prayers at all. Let not such be thine.

Now may our joyful tongues
Our Maker's honour sing;
Jesus, the priest, receives our songs,
And bears them to the King!

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and up his cross daily and follow me. Luke ix. 23; see Matt. x. 38; Mark viii. 34; and Luke xiv. 27.

DOING this, all the rest will be easy. If we k that we are nothing, are unworthy of everyth and have nothing of our own, we can lose noth We have no property, since we are but stewards of Lord. We have no honour or shame of our own, a the manner of the world: this being our only hon if God be glorified; this our only shame, if he be honoured by us. The glory of God we must hav heart, and in his cause be like lions; but in our cause like lambs. Therefore, when we are crosse things which do not concern the glory of God and real good of our neighbour, but our own interest, are unwilling to suffer anything, we shall misca and be involved in greater troubles; but denying selves, we shall lose only a good deal of vexati and instead of this, receive Christ, with all his sp tual and temporal blessings, as far as we want th which alone can make us cheerful and happy. whoever desires to please the world, seeking him and his own glory, cannot be a follower of Ch And how will it be with him in the hour of death judgment? By this every one, learned or unlearn may try himself. Whom does he please?—God the world?

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be.

o you, therefore, which believe, he is precious. 1 Peter ii. 7.

READER, put these following questions to thine own heart, as in the presence of God; if thou canst answer them affirmatively, doubt not thy real interest in him, and in his great salvation:—Is the Lord Jesus Christ precious to me, as he is to all that believe? Once he was to me without form or comeliness, and I saw no beauty in him; is he now to me the chief of ten thousands, yea, altogether lovely? Do I behold an infinite amiableness and glory in his person, a transcendent excellency in his righteousness, an inexhaustible fulness in his grace, and a heaven of happiness in his love? Do I esteem him above every name, love him above every creature and thing, and value an interest in him before ten thousand worlds? Is the language of my soul, "None but Christ, none but Christ! Whom have I in heaven but thee?—and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?" Is all the world, all that is admired in it, esteemed by me as dung, and beheld with the greatest contempt, when compared with a glorious Christ, the ravishing sweetness of his love, and the unsearchable richness of his grace? Do I wish nothing so ardently, seek nothing so diligently, and rejoice in nothing so greatly as to win Christ, and be found in him? Be this my portion!—and I can say, I want, I wish, I ask no more!

In vain I seek for rest
In all created good!
It leaves me yet unblest,
And makes me pant for God
And sure at rest I cannot be,
Until my heart find rest in thee!

T.

Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. The King's daughter is all glorious within,—her clothing is of wrought gold. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him. Ps. xlv. 9–11, 13.

OBSERVE, O my soul, that thy celestial Bridegroom does not require any ornament, merit, worthiness or beauty of thine own! No; he will wash thee himself with his blood, he will adorn thee, and make thee truly amiable to himself and to his Father. O sweet and eternal truth! "He has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." And being clothed with his righteousness, we have more than angelic beauty. If we have received the spirit of adoption, let us cleave to Christ alone, love him above all things, and walk in his commandments. This is not only our duty, but a needful evidence of our sonship.

The King of saints, how fair his face,
Adorn'd with majesty and grace!
He comes with blessings from above,
And wins the nations to his love.

At his right hand our eyes behold
The queen arrayed in purest gold;
The world admires her heavenly dress,
Her robe of joy and righteousness.

He forms her beauties like his own:
He calls and seats her near his throne:
Fair stranger, let thine heart forget
The idols of thy native state.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. v. 24; Rom. vi. 6. See also Gal. ii. 20.

ALTHOUGH the flesh be alive still, and frequently stir, yet it cannot fulfil its desires when it is fastened to the cross; with the crucifying of the flesh we have to do as long as we live. This is the cross we are to take up daily, and which either prevents many outward crosses, or at least yields great comfort under them. The cross being an extraordinary good mean to experience the sweetness of the word of God, thou must always be ready and prepared for it, O my soul. And if none come from without, take care to break thy own will in everything. Painful and hard as this may seem to be at first, yet it will certainly very soon grow easier, and be matter of real joy. Blessing and peace will attend thy ways and steps, and thou shalt glorify God for having been resigned and guided, not by thy own, but by his, good-will and pleasure. Self-will, on the other hand, creates nothing but vexation, trouble, and uneasiness. It is punished by itself, deprives us of real blessings, and therefore deserves, and is best to be broken and crucified in its first motions. Then help me, by pouring the Holy Spirit into my heart, to crucify the flesh with the vile affections and lusts thereof.

Still I feel a fleshly part,
Much corruption in my heart;
Oh, I'm very vile indeed!
Of thy blood I sure have need.

MARCH 8.

The Lord had respect unto Abel, &c. Gen. iv. 4, 5.

HERE are two brothers, each bringing an oblation to the Lord. Cain, as a husbandman, brought of the produce of the ground he cultivated; Abel, as a shepherd, some of the firstlings of his flock, with the fat of them; consequently both believed that there was a God that made the world, and was to be worshipped; and yet one was accepted and the other rejected. Cain's sacrifice was wholly eucharistic, or a thank-offering to God for the blessings of his providence. Abel's was not only of the eucharistic, but of the expiatory kind; and while it was an expression of gratitude for the blessings of Providence, it was also typical of the atonement by Christ, and expressive of his hope of redemption through him; but what made the chief difference between them was, that Cain presented his offering while his heart was withheld, and without faith in Christ, so was of the wicked one. Abel brought both his person and sacrifice an offering to the Lord he presented his oblation, and performed the othe parts of worship with faith in God and the promise Saviour, and with sincerity, humility, and lov Thus God had respect to him and his offering; b neither the person nor offering of Cain was accept Reader, mark the difference; by this Abel speaks thee: art thou in a state of acceptance with G Is thy whole dependence for pardon and life Christ? Dost thou obey from a principle of l Then thou shalt be blessed with righteous Abel and for ever!

y shall the priest make an atonement for you, to m, that ye may be clean from all your sins before . It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you, and ye ct your souls by a statute for ever. The life of the s the blood; and I have given it to you upon the make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood eth an atonement for the soul. Lev. xvi. 30, 31; xi.

reat day of atonement is that on which ist shed his blood for us on the cross, and ıade atonement for us. Now, if it was for the Israelites to afflict their souls and ıeir bodies on the great day of atonement, ı more ought we to pray for humility and e, as the evidence of our interest in the pro- made by Christ Jesus! And as they ab- ɔm all labour on that day, when the high ıe was employed, so should we abstain from nful works, and particularly from all self- of righteousness, and seek our salvation e meritorious blood of atonement shed by Priest; for the life of our souls is in the Jesus. O my Redeemer, may I, with an ɔul, ever seek my atonement, life, and salva- hy blood and death! and may I lie down p in a comfortable hope that I am pardoned ıy blood, thy Spirit bearing witness of it to ence!

Father, God, who seest in me
Only sin and misery;
See thine own anointed One!
Look on thy beloved Son!

By the grace of God I am what I am. 1 Cor. xv. 10.

BE this my motto, both as to my natural and spiritual life:—how else could I have existed at all? Had not foreknowledge planned, and wisdom contrived, and power put every atom together, and fixed my scene of action, I had never been here. Nor is this God of grace less to be seen in every motion of my soul towards him. Had not every spring been in him, this table on which I lean had felt as much bias towards him as I. The first check of conscience, the first thrill of fear, the first view of guilt, the first tear of penitence, were all his own; the first drawings of the Spirit, the first sight of Christ, the first dawn of hope, were all his own; every succeeding step in the path of duty, every attainment in grace, every victory over the world and sin, every evidence and token of the safety of my everlasting state, and every sweet interval of communion I have had with him, were still all his own; and the last labour of love, the last act of faith, and conquest over sin, death, and hell together with an admission into eternal glory, must and shall be all his own likewise. The spring is low the mean is Christ; the footing, firm; "the her stone shall be brought forth with shoutings, cryi Grace, grace unto it;" and grace shall be crow with everlasting glory.

What'er I am, what'er I hope,
Proceeds from bounty of rich grace;
Grace makes and holds my body up,
And heals my spirit's sickly face.

Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that ed for all, then were all dead; and that he died for they who live should not henceforth live unto them- ut unto him who died for them and rose again. 14, 15.

have the love of God shed abroad in our s, it will cause us to love God intensely, and id labour for the salvation of men. And as ved the world as to give his Son for it, and so loved the world as to give his life for it, luenced by the very same love, will desire to l be spent for the glory of God, and the sal- immortal souls. And if the love and power constrain us, we must needs be meditating ig on him and his death. This will cut off igs of our own, and make room for Christ verything in us, and through us. O Lord, ove on the cross fire my frozen heart also; y now begin to love and praise thee purely ntly, and to offer my whole life up to thee re sacrifice of love.

Now, sinners, dry your tears,
Let hopeless sorrows cease;
Bow to the sceptre of Christ's love,
And take the offer'd peace.

Lord, we obey thy call;
We lay an humble claim
To the salvation thou hast brought,
And love and praise thy name!

Raise your triumphant songs
To an immortal tune;
Let the wide earth resound the deeds
Celestial grace has done.

deth to do, do it with thy might; for levice, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in u gvest. Eccles. ix. 10.

e is to glorify God, and to work lvation; all other concerns are "the time is short; as the tree and where death strikes down, her for mercy or misery; so that o the Red Sea; if I go in an shall be in glory, and my rejoic- ee all mine enemies dead upon I go in an Egyptian, if I be on , on this side the covenant, and g the troops of Pharaoh, justice strength, and an inundation of w my soul for ever. Or I may sleep of the ten virgins, of whom slumbered and slept." We shall

Now, if I lie down with the h the bridegroom; but if I sleep hout oil in my lamp, without ıave closed the gates of mercy I see then this life is the time th to meet the Lord; this is the t do my work; and the day dged according to my works is t how soon I may fall into this d, grant that I may live every desire to appear the last day in

Sin is a reproach to any people. Prov. xiv. 34.

BE not deceived therefore with false notions of faitl Where there is true faith, no sin has dominio Sin will be ever stirring, often raging, and sometim prevailing, but never reigning, where true faith is. believer, through a strong and sudden temptatio may be captivated by sin, but he is no willing ca tive; he hates sin, and prays and watches against i and as faith increases, his power over sin increas too, and the image of God waxes brighter in h heart. A man having no feeling of the despera wickedness of his heart, may imagine he has fai enough; but being once convinced of that, he soc perceives that it is the hardest thing in the world believe; it requires the same power by which Chri was raised from the dead. St. Paul most emph tically describes it with six remarkable words, Ep i. 19, 20. How then can any man think it an ea matter to believe? O the dreadful blindness ar security which all the world runs into! May tl Lord open their eyes!

Lord, how secure my conscience was,
And felt no inward dread!
I was alive without the law,
And thought my sins were dead.

My hopes of heaven were firm and bright;
But since the precept came
With a convincing power and light,
I find how vile I am!

I'm like a helpless captive, sold
Under the power of sin;
I cannot do the good I would,
Nor keep my conscience clean.

At the commandment of the Lord, the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the Lord, they pitched; and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the Lord, and journeyed not. Num. ix. 18, 19.

THUS the spiritual Israelites; they ought not to undertake anything from their own will, lest confusion and disappointment should encompass every path. The unconverted are full of their own will; how should they succeed! They are bewildered here, and run into perdition eternally. Sometimes the faithful may, with a good design, when they are engaged in a good work, outrun the will of God, and not wait for his counsel. And yet the Israelites journeyed not, though the cloud tarried many days, and they might imagine they were losing time on their journey. O my God, grant that in all things, even in my best works, I may be guided by thine eye, and wait for thy counsel with a resigned temper. May I speak or be silent, work or rest, when and as thou wilt. Then shall my ways be blest, and thou wilt never leave me nor forsake me. And may I remember that God guides the way of his saints by a merciful dispensation of his providence, and in that dispensation he proportions the burden to the back that is to bear it, and "tempers even the blast to the shorn lamb."

In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John i 4. *And this is the record that God hath given to us, eternal life; and this life is in his Son.* 1 John v. 11. *I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* John viii. 12.

WHATEVER notional knowledge men may have of divine truths, as they are doctrinally proposed in the Scripture, yet if they know them not in their respect unto the person of Christ, as the foundation of the counsels of God, if they discern not how they proceed from him, and centre in him, they will bring no saving spiritual light unto their understandings; for all spiritual life and light is in him, and from him alone. The difference between believers and unbelievers as to knowledge, is not so much in the matter of their knowledge as in the manner of knowing. Unbelievers, some of them, may know more, and be able to say more of God, his perfections and will, than many believers; but they know nothing as they ought, nothing in a right manner, nothing spiritually and savingly, nothing with a holy, heavenly light. The excellency of a believer is not that he hath large apprehensions of things, but that what he doth apprehend, which may perhaps be very little, he sees in the light of the Spirit of God, in a saving, soul-transforming light. And this is that which gives us communion with God, and not prying thoughts, or curious raised notions. In this knowledge, Lord, give me to increase every day!

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Rom. xv. 1. *Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* Gal. vi. 1. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?* Rom. xiv. 4.

EXTRAORDINARY quickenings and strengthenings, being often followed by particular temptations, conflicts, and sufferings, require a particular watchfulness, if we would be earnest not to provoke the Lord to visit us with sore punishments for our carelessness. Fear, therefore; rejoice with trembling; and as a needful means to secure thyself from falling, temper thy joy with true humility and gentleness towards the faults of others. Be never so high-minded, O man, at the miscarriage of others, as to think thou wouldst not do so, should it happen to be thy case! for if God does not hold thee up himself, thou wilt surely make greater mistakes. Therefore, thou hadst better not look upon others, but upon thyself; and for fear of falling, be continually watchful in prayer. A great many would not have fallen so deep, had they been truly humble and more charitable in judging of others. He who exalteth himself above others, and does not bear with the weak, is sometimes humbled and debased under the very weakest of all. Bear, therefore, since God bears with thee; and he that bears most with others, shows the greatest strength.

Jesus, Lord, we look to Thee;
Let us in thy name agree;
Each to each unite, endear,
Come and spread thy banner here.

Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore, for thy name's sake, lead me and guide me. Ps. xxxi. 3. *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel.* Jer. xxxi. 9.

HE that comes in this manner will certainly be led of God. Now, O Lord, I am blind, and heartily desire to be directed by thee alone in all my ways and steps, in great and in little things. Suffer me never to follow my own spirit and natural inclinations, whatever good appearance they may have. Be pleased to cross them continually, whenever they are contrary to thy will. Often have I been deceived by false appearances already; my zeal has not always been according to knowledge; I have put natural passion in the place thereof, and thought I was contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and have afterwards found it no better than the effects of a party spirit. Be, then, a father to me, O Lord, and instruct thy waiting child in all necessary truths, and lead me in all thy righteous ways!

Thou art my portion, O my God!
 And Christ my living way;
Incline my heart to keep thy word,
 And on my Christ to stay.

I would be always wholly thine;
 O save thy servant, Lord!
Thou art my shield, my hiding-place;
 My hope is in thy word.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isa. xxvi. 3, 4. *Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* Chap. xxvii. 5.

LET us get the divine favour, and we will be at peace, and have happiness in our own souls, and then shall good come unto us. The peace which God gives is a peace of unutterable happiness. In it is contained all the blessings of the gospel of Christ. Let us search well our own hearts, and see if we have that peace; and let us do it now, for we know not what a day may bring forth. But to enjoy this undisturbed peace, great care must be taken that we do not look to and depend upon anything in ourselves, since all is imperfect, and ever will be so. We are to trust only in the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, to feed our souls continually on this gospel of peace, and be ever seeking him by diligent prayer, watchful, faithful, quiet, and humble; for we never lose anything of our peace, except it be stolen by some pride, or other unguarded affection.

Hence from my soul, sad thoughts, begone,
And leave me to my joys;
My tongue shall triumph in my God,
And make a joyful noise.

Darkness and doubts had veiled my mind,
And drown'd my head in tears,
Till sov'reign grace, with shining rays,
Dispelled my gloomy fears!

thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name. The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads. Isa. liv. 5; xxxv. 10.

WHEN Cyrus took the king of Armenia, and his son Tigranes, and their wives and children prisoners, and, upon their humble submission, beyond all hope gave them their liberty and their lives,—in their return home, as they were all commending Cyrus,—some for his personage, some for his power, some for his clemency, Tigranes asked his wife, "What thinkest thou of Cyrus? is he not a comely and a proper man, of a majestic presence?" "Truly," said she, "I know not what manner of man he is; I never looked upon him." "Why," said he, "where were thine eyes all the while? upon whom didst thou look?" "I fixed mine eyes," said she, "all the while upon him (meaning her husband) who, in my hearing, offered to Cyrus to lay down his life for my ransom." Thus, if any question the devout soul, once indeed captivated by the world, but now enamoured of Christ, her heavenly Bridegroom, whether she is not charmed with the riches, pleasures, and gaieties of the world?—her answer is, That her eyes and her heart are now fixed on a nobler object, even on him who not only made an offer, like Tigranes, to die in her stead, but actually laid down his life to ransom her; and as her dear Bridegroom is now in heaven, her looks are after him, and she can esteem nothing on earth in comparison of him.

Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them. I am thy part and thine inheritance. Num. xviii. 20.

WHOEVER loves and possesses the Lord Jesus, finds unspeakably more delight, honour, and riches in him, than in all other things. He is the precious burden of their cares. All is willingly denied for his sake, and this denial springs from faith? Now, O Lord, thou art the All I need to make me happy, the only inheritance that can supply my every want; and to draw near to thee is my greatest joy. I desire to love thee evermore, and to show that love by keeping thy commandments; and I pray that a sweet sense of thy love to me may become my daily portion, and my only bosom-treasure; and that I may be enabled to adopt the language of the Psalmist as my own, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee; thou art the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26.

Beset with snares on ev'ry hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand:
Saviour divine! diffuse thy light,
To guide my doubtful footsteps right!

Engage this roving, treach'rous heart,
Great God, to choose the better part;
To scorn the trifles of a day
For joys that none can take away.

Then let the wildest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck shall I fear,
But all my treasures with me bear.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us. Rom. viii. 26.

"GOD is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." God hath many worshippers on particular occasions, who cannot be called spiritual worshippers. Take, for instance, the prayers of wicked men under their convictions, or their fears, troubles, and dangers, and the prayers of believers:—the former is merely an outcry that distressed nature makes to the God of it, and as such alone it considers him; but the other is the voice of the spirit of adoption, addressing itself from the hearts of believers unto God as a father. Woe to professors of the gospel, who shall be seduced to believe, that all they have to do with God consists in their attendance upon moral virtue: it is fit for them so to do, who, being weary of Christianity, have a mind to turn Pagans; but "our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ," under the promised working and intercession of the Spirit; for by them alone are the love of the Father, and the fruits of the mediation of the Son, communicated unto us, without which we have no interest or comfort in them; and by the influences of the Spirit alone we are enabled to make any acceptable returns of obedience to God. To exclude the internal operations of the Holy Ghost, is to destroy the gospel.

Spirit of wisdom, grace, and power,
Of prayer and faith the quick'ning spring,
With Father, Son, we Thee adore,
And holy, holy, holy, sing!

Now they strive to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 1 Cor. ix. 25. *For he that overcometh shall inherit all things.* Rev. xxi. 7.

TO be only an almost Christian is a very hard thing; but to be a Christian altogether makes all easy and pleasant;—and such as desire to have the whole Christ, his whole salvation and all that is his, must needs give themselves up to him, not only in part, but wholly, according to that fundamental and most reasonable rule, "All for all;" and, as far as we deny him anything, we make ourselves unhappy; but the more we are resigned to him, the more we are fit to enjoy him and his spiritual blessings.

Many would sooner be persuaded to follow Christ, if they were allowed to serve him by halves, and reserve some things to themselves. But what could that profit them? Christ will not be bargained with; and nothing is more dangerous than dividing our hearts between him and the world, or waiting from time to time for a more convenient season to break through. Thus you may live many years, and be neither cold nor hot; and so at last be spewed out of the Lord's mouth. Consider this well, O ye double-minded, lukewarm souls! Christianity requires great striving, and overcoming all things, even our most favourite and darling lusts. Rouse, therefore, thy drowsy heart,—spare thyself no longer,—rise above the trifles of this world,—fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John xiii. 34.

IT is a precept of the Levitical law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Lev. xix. 18. But this commandment of Christ's was something more than the Mosaic precept. It is added, "as I have loved you." Christ loved his neighbour more than himself, for he laid down his life for men. And in this he calls upon all his disciples to imitate him. But this is not the only one of his commandments that enjoins brotherly love; all the commandments of God are commandments of love, tending to our real good and great happiness; far from being grievous to those who have faith and love, the practice thereof is life and peace. The world may think it a grievous burden; but this is a great mistake indeed. Sin is grievous: in hatred, envy, anger, revenge, pride, there is nothing but torment and slavery; but in love there is a sweet rest and pleasure.—Thus a sinner always punishes himself, and is robbed of great peace and blessing, by transgressing the commandments of God.

Saviour, look down with pitying eyes
 Our jarring wills control;
Let cordial, kind affections rise,
 And harmonise the soul!

Subdue in us the carnal mind,
 Its enmity destroy;
With cords of love th' old Adam bind
 And melt him into joy!

One thing is needful, &c. Luke x. 42.

WE must not pretend to serve God with only going to church, and doing other acts of outward devotion; whilst we are dead and cold, our religion is vain. Who first, by faith, seeks grace from the words of Christ, like Mary, is served by Christ; and this constrains him to serve Christ and his neighbour readily again. It is almost impossible for such to go on in haughtiness, envy, hatred, and disobedience. Grace and faith will resist it, and make them lowly, gentle, willing, obedient, active, without relying on any works of their own. He that obtains Christ, the one thing needful, receives with him all the rest, and has no more need to be troubled about many things. He being our All, we may always live happily; whereas the children of this world must always be cumbered and divided between fears and hopes about their fate. In vanity we shall never find this good part; neither is there any salvation in the works of the law. Faith alone takes hold of it; and whoever withdraws his heart and senses from the noise and bustle of this world, who quickly looks for salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ, will certainly find it his better part.

The one thing needful, that good part
That Mary chose with all her heart,
I would pursue with heart and mind,
And seek unwearied till I find.
O Lord, my God, to thee I pray,
Teach me to know and find the way
How I may have my sins forgiven,
And safe and surely get to heaven.

e with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Ps. li. 7. *Hide ce from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.* . *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as as snow.* Isa. i. 18.

us ever have our sins before our faces. Ps. 3. Let us remember that the eye of God is tly upon us, and that, as he looketh not on ward but on the inward parts, his purity and tice will be highly incensed. With a just then of our transgressions, let us beg God to ay his face from them, to blot them all out as cloud. Let us come and do this freely, and ome daily. We must not keep away from on account of our stumblings and manifold This would cast us under the law again, and under condemnation; but we should humble es directly before God, and seek earnestly for through the blood of Christ. The longer we his, the worse our cause will grow; and the it is done, the sooner we shall have forgive- The Lord not imputing those sins to us which erely repented of, our soul returns to rest and, instead of falling into carnal security (as ay think), it will rather strengthen our faith, ke us more watchful. Hasten, therefore, and s soon and as well as thou canst. He will thee, if thou canst but creep.

O Lord, I fall before thy face:
My only refuge is thy grace!
No bleeding beast, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away!

Christian's Prayer.—*Deliver us from evil.*
Divine Answer.—*Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* Isa. xliii. 1, 2. *Christ has, by his own blood, once entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* Heb. ix. 12.

THIS precious redemption is the foundation of our present deliverance, and will finally produce an everlasting deliverance from all evil. He who hates and detests not only the evil of punishment, but of sin itself, and, consequently, pants after Jesus, both for his love and for his likeness, such a one hath faith already, and sin has lost its dominion over him. And though he may be tempted with it severely, yet he is under the law no more; for the reigning power of sin being broken, the law has lost its condemning power also; we are delivered from the power of the evil one, and we may be sure of a continual, nay, eternal redemption. We may often feel the evil, but by prayer and watchfulness be as often delivered from it also.

Thy solemn vows are on me, Lord;
Thou shalt receive my praise!
I'll sing, "How faithful is thy word!
"How righteous all thy ways!"

Thou hast secured my soul from death:
O set thy prisoner free!
That heart and hand, and life and breath,
May be employed for thee!

Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee. 2 Tim. i. 6. Ps. lii. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 18, 28.

HOW can this be done?—Answer: By looking as well upon thy own great poverty and wants, as upon the riches of grace which are in Christ for thee, and so drawing near to God through him in faith; but it is not enough to do this once for all, or now and then only. It is to be thy daily work. One day's omission may greatly hurt thy soul. Especially the morning hours are very proper for this purpose. These must directly be laid hold on to converse with God in prayer, before we meddle with anything else in our business, though ever so needful and important, for fear of being entangled and distracted perhaps the whole day; and to gather the whole strength, draw as near to Christ as possible, and even wrestle with him, as if it were the last time. Pour out thy whole heart before him, not giving over too soon; but be instant in thy supplications, at least with continual inward groaning, till thy heart burn within thee, and thou feel the quickening influence of his grace and Spirit. Then great care is to be taken to preserve this blessing and strength in a quiet and well-composed mind, examining thyself frequently, especially at nights, how the day has been spent; and be not put off with a slight answer.

I'll lift my hands, I'll raise my voice,
While I have breath to pray or praise;
This work shall make my heart rejoice,
And spend the remnant of my days.

For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. Heb. v. 13.

THE apostle, with some severity of expression, tells the Hebrews, or converted Jews to whom he wrote, that instead of being capable of strong meat, or attaining to the perfection of Christian doctrine, and being skilful in the word of righteousness, they chose to continue babes in knowledge, and like children, had all their work to begin again. It is, therefore, a matter of the greatest importance to know what that word of righteousness is, in which they were unskilful, not having their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, truth and error. Let it only be observed, that they were looking back to the law, and consequently in danger of returning to it for justification, and thus falling from the doctrine of grace. The design of this epistle was to keep them steadfast in the faith; and it will appear at once, that the righteousness which they were ignorant of, or ready to reject, is that of Christ, "who, by one offering," the finishing act of his obedience, "hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. How many, at all times, who have the name and appearance of well-grown Christians, are just such babes as the Hebrews were, and have the same need to be told that they are unskilful in the word, reason, or ground of a justifying righteousness, and exhorted to go on to perfection in Christian doctrine, as well as to further degrees of Christian holiness!

gospel, the Son of God and ... evealed to us; and by the Spirit they are . us. External revelation by the word, and the Spirit, are both necessary to salvation. aul was separated from his mother's womb d by the grace of God, yet he had not an relation of Jesus Christ in his heart till he external word of Christ with his ear, saying, aul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts ix. 4. rn to prize both the outward testimony of and the inward testimony of the Spirit. The a revelation of Jesus Christ, without which never have known that our sins are atoned e blood, our persons justified by the righteous- l our souls everlastingly saved by the work of but is this knowledge all that is necessary to ? No! persons may attain a notion of these the head, and understand somewhat of them, the heart be without precious faith in Christ, ... of any saving hope

To reveal his Son in me. Gal. i. 16. *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* Matt. xvi. 17.

HENCE begins our spiritual life, a life proceeding from God, and holding communion with God, and tending to the glory of God; the honour and happiness of our souls ariseth from this revealing of Christ in us. Oh, for the reviving comfort of this, while we consider it. To reveal Christ in us, is to make such a clear discovery of the matchless charms and glory of his person to our souls, as we never saw before; so that our hearts are enamoured with him, we choose him, love him, delight in him, and cleave to him in all his offices and characters; for, by the eye of our soul we then behold his glory,—the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth to us miserable sinners; hence he is the only-beloved of our souls. Without this revelation of Jesus Christ in us, alas! what is all outward profession? No more than mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery. O my soul! O my dear friends! be not content to live without a constant revelation of Christ to your souls! This makes the conscience peaceful, the heart heavenly, and the soul happy. This inspires love, subdues lust, captivates the affections, makes the whole man happy in God, and creates heaven in the soul. If Christ be within the heart, all will be right and well without in the life. If you believe Christ as revealed in the word, this blessed promise is for you: "I will manifest myself *unto him.*" John xiv. 21.

The blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

WHATEVER we do of ourselves, in answer to our convictions, is a covering, not a cleansing; and if we die in this condition, unwashed, uncleansed, unpurified, it is utterly impossible that we should be admitted into the blessed presence of the holy God. Rev. xxi. 7. Let no man deceive you with vain words. It is not doing a few good works, it is not an outward profession of religion, that will give you an access with joy unto God. Unless you are washed from your actual transgressions in the blood of Christ, and cleansed from the pollution of your nature by the Spirit of God, you shall not inherit the kingdom of God; yea, without this washing you will be a horrible sight unto saints and angels, to yourselves and to one another, when the shame of your nakedness shall be made to appear. If, therefore, you would not perish and that eternally, if you would not perish as base, defiled creatures, an abhorring unto all flesh, then, when your pride, and your wealth, and your beauty, and your ornaments, and your duties, will stand you in no stead, look out betimes after that only way of purifying and cleansing your souls which God hath ordained. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. ix. 22. "The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin." "Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter i. 18, 19.

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. Gen. ix. 13.

THE rainbow is a token of the covenant of preservation made with Noah, and with all the creatures of the earth; it is fixed and sure; it may be considered also as an emblem of the covenant of grace (Isa. liv. 9, 10); or rather, it may be an emblem of Christ himself (Rev. x. 1), as appears in many particulars. When we are apt to fear being overwhelmed by the rain, Jehovah shows this seal of his promise that we shall not. Thus he removes our fears, when we weep for sin, and are afraid of a flood of wrath, by reminding us of the covenant of grace established in Jesus. The thicker the cloud, afterwards the brighter the bow in the cloud; so when afflictions abound, consolations do much more abound. The bow appears when one part of the sky is clear; which intimates mercy remembered in the midst of wrath. The rainbow is caused by the refraction of the beams of the sun; so all the glory of the covenant of grace and the significancy of the seals are derived from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. The bow speaks terror; but this is without string or arrow, is directed upwards, and not to the earth. God looks upon the bow to remember his covenant; so should we, that we may be mindful of the covenant of grace with faith and thankfulness.

Christ's open arms like rainbows stand,
To grasp and save a guilty land;
Oh! take me, Lord, within thy bow,
And all its glories sweetly show!

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. vi. 14.

WHATEVER others may do, or whatever they may exult or glory in, God forbid that I should exult, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the grand doctrine of justification and sanctification through Him. And what else could I exult or glory in?—for a true believer has nothing to glory in but Christ alone. Even in his very best performances he will be often deeply humbled, and cry out, "Lord, enter not into judgment!"—and well he may; for the ground of our glory, comfort, and salvation, is not in works, but in Christ, and the free grace of God; who, for his Son's sake, lays nothing to our charge, but daily covers and richly pardons all our iniquities: and thus believers walking steadily, might always be kept in solid peace; for the cross of Christ is a solid and unshaken foundation.

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Purifying their hearts by faith. Acts xv. 9.

BY faith in the Son of God we get an interest in his great and glorious salvation; we are justified by faith; we have peace with God by faith. This is an excellent grace, which brings us out of a state of slavery and sin, into the liberty of the sons and daughters of God, and will issue in everlasting salvation. Faith purifies the heart of man, naturally vicious, and unites us to Christ, the root of all holiness. Now, reader, examine yourself whether you be in the faith; try the tree by its fruits; ask yourself these questions: Has my faith a purifying influence on my heart? Does the view of Christ dying for my sins make me die unto them? Has my faith in Christ, as wounded for my transgressions and bruised for my iniquities, made me bitterly lament them, sincerely hate them, and seek the death of every one of them? Though there may be still much sin in me, is there none allowed? Is there none, no, not one; no, not that sin which does most easily beset me, which I desire to be spared and excused in? Do I rather look upon all sin as the enemy of Christ and my own soul, and as such do I hate it with a perfect hatred? Am I praying fervently for divine grace to subdue it? and in the strength of that grace, do I maintain a constant and vigorous war with it, determined never to give it any rest in my heart, never to cease my conflict with it, till I have gained the complete and everlasting victory? Then thou art upright, go on and prosper!

e shall cause them that come out of Jacob to take root. Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. Isa. xxvii. 6. *They shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.* Chap. xxxvii. 31. *They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.* Ps. xcii. 14. *Her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.* Jer. xvii. 8.

THE evangelical Christians look upon themselves as barren trees, ever crying out, "O my leanness, my leanness!" Even before the judgment-seat of Christ they acknowledge no fruits, nor will plead them, though they have been fruitful. Matt. xxv. 37–39. The reason is, they are poor in spirit, and are not pleased with their fruits but only with Christ. Grant, O Lord, that I may earnestly seek to bring forth fruit, and may grow in fruitfulness as I grow in years, and never cease from yielding fruit; hereby proving myself to be a tree of the Lord's planting, whose leaf is green, and whose branches are flourishng and fruitful! Yet bless me also with deep overty of spirit, that I may see myself still nothing, aving nothing of my own to glory in or to justify e; and thus esteem Christ my All, and rest upon n wholly.

Lord, 'tis a pleasant thing to stand,
In gardens planted by thy hand;
Let me within thy courts be seen,
Like a young cedar, fresh and green.

There grow thy saints in faith and love,
Blest with thine influence from above.
Time, that doth all things else impair,
Still makes them flourish strong and fair.

The breaker is come up before them; they have broken up, and have passed through the gate; and their king (as the author and finisher of faith) *shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them.* Micah ii. 13. *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* John xvi. 33. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

SOMETIMES the enemy seems to get an advantage over us; but the battle is not over yet. At last thou shalt have the victory, and carry the day for all that. In hard struggles remember the power of Christ, who, in his resurrection, broke through everything. With him thou canst also break through, and be more than conqueror. Yea, in every conflict, if thy faith be firm, thou canst be sure of victory beforehand; for faith engages Christ's power, and his power ensureth victory: it is as impossible for thine enemies to keep thee always in bonds, as it was impossible that Christ could be kept in the grave by the stone, seal, and keepers. Nay, the greater their force is, the more glorious will be the victory of Christ over them.

Hosannah to our conquering King!
The Prince of Darkness flies;
His troops rush headlong down to hell,
Like lightning from the skies.

There, bound in chains, the lions roar,
And fright the rescued sheep;
But heavy bars confine their power
And malice to the deep!

Hosannah to our conqu'ring King!
All hail, incarnate love!
Ten thousand songs and glories wait
To crown thy head above!

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos iii. 3.

THEY must be agreed in heart, in affection, in will, in their inclinations and pursuits, or they cannot walk together in any mutual confidence and comfortable communion. "What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" 2 Cor. vi. 15. We cannot walk with Jesus without a living union with him, a hearty love to him, and a holy delight in him: nor can he walk with us on any other principles. We cannot walk with each other without mutual love. A living union with Jesus, cemented and sealed by his Holy Spirit, is the only bond of union and agreement between Christians, whereby they can walk together, to the honour of God and their own benefit.—Alas! how much it is to be lamented that those who, through grace, are thus united, should be so visibly shy of each other, because they differ in lesser matters. O my dear Saviour! help me to be more agreed with thee, and to walk more closely with thee, and in more real affection and love with all those who are really thine, to the praise and glory of thy grace! Amen and Amen!

May the grace of Christ our Saviour,
And the Father's boundless love,
With the Holy Spirit's favour,
Rest upon us from above!

Thus shall we abide in union
With each other and the Lord,
And possess, in sweet communion,
Joy which earth cannot afford!

Let your moderation be known unto all men. Phil. iv. 5. *For charity* (that is love) *edifieth.* 1 Cor. viii. 1.

IF thou rebuke others, and would have them to be like thee, thou oughtest to examine thyself first, whether it flows from a blind party-zeal, impatience, and self-will, or from a true principle of love; and whether thou art also much in prayer for them, both before and after. He who lays the long-sufferings of the Son of God truly to heart, and considers how gently he has treated him, and still treats him like the weakest child, must needs be moderate also towards all men, and think, "If nobody will bear with others, surely I must." Lord, give me the right spirit of meekness, to show all lenity to my fellow-Christians. To bear with their infirmities and weaknesses, and in everything to ascribe the blame to my own wicked and perverse heart. Keep me, O Lord, from pride and vain conceit, that stirreth up to boldness in the works of the flesh, and that engendereth strife. Let the meek and the lowly mind of the holy Child Jesus dwell in me, and through it let my moderation be known unto all men, for charity edifieth.

Watch o'er my lips, and guard them, Lord,
From ev'ry rash and heedless word;
Nor let my feet incline to tread
The guilty path where sinners lead!

O may the righteous, when I stray,
Smite and reprove my wand'ring way;
Their gentle words, like ointment shed,
Shall never bruise, but cheer my head.

David's Prayer.—*Put thou my tears into thy bottle; are they not in thy book?* Ps. lvi. 8.
Divine Answer.—*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.* Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6.

BELIEVER, if thou art now reaping in joy, if thou hast a heart full of gladness and art singing hymns of triumph, be thankful, for few have attained to such a state of assurance and happiness; but remember that this work belongs more to the next world than the present. Here weeping and rejoicing follow each other; weeping for thy sad subjection to sin, Satan, the world, and the flesh; rejoicing for the victories Christ is giving thee over them. However strong be thy faith, sorrow will oft find a lodging in thy bosom; for there is no retreat from the field of battle; and thine enemies will not leave thee while thou hast a breath to draw. Let this be a check to impatience. Let it humble thee in the sight of the Holy One of Israel, the Lord thy Redeemer. It is indeed needful to be humbled under a sense of thy misery, so as to sigh, groan, and weep often; and this is the true seed for eternity. This is the precious seed which the Lord requires you to bear, and which going forth bearing while engaged in the Christian warfare, you shall return from the field of battle, laden with a rich harvest of glory, into Immanuel's peaceful land. Not a single tear or groan will be lost; they are all in the book of the Lord.

The Lord hath heard my supplication. He will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. The needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. Ps. vi. 9; ix. 9, 10, 18. See also Ps. iii. 4; xxxi. 1, 7; xci. 14, 15; xii. 5.

WHOEVER would receive comfort from these words, must first be sensible of his poverty and misery, and show it by confessing his sins, and feeling nothing in himself but helplessness and unworthiness. He must come with all his poverty to a rich Saviour, and daily entreat his mercy, carefully remembering that the Lord has promised to supply all our wants, however great our poverty and misery may be; therefore, beware of unbelief, and do not suspect the Lord's kindness, but seek to him, and hope in him, and expect all good things from him, assuring thyself that neither thy hope, nor thy prayer, nor a single sigh of thine will be lost. O my God! grant me faith to say, The Lord heareth my supplication. The Lord receiveth my prayer! Praised be God, who hath not rejected my prayer, nor turned away his goodness from me, but is my protector and hope!

My best desires are faint and few,
I fain would strive for more;
But when I cry, "My strength renew,"
Seem weaker than before.

Thy saints are comforted, I know,
And love thy house of prayer;
I therefore go where others go,
But find no comfort there.

Christian's Prayer.—*Lead us not into temptation.* Matt. vi. 13.
Divine Answer.—*God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* 1 Cor. x. 13. Psal. lxvii. 2.

THE nearer to heaven, the higher the mountains, the deeper the valleys, and the sharper the conflicts. But be not discouraged; it is only for the trial of our faith. God gives also more strength, carries us through all, as he has done from the beginning, and suffers none to be ashamed who trust in him. Sometimes we may seem to be tempted above measure, and are afraid of being confounded; but far from it; it is quite impossible we should. Here thou hast the plain words of the Lord. Take hold on them, and wait his time; for since the world stood, none have been confounded in anything who have waited for his promise; and surely he will not make thee the first instance of the failure of his word. By no means. Phil. i. 10; Isa. liv. 10. Rather "shall the mountains depart, and the hills be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee."

Our God, how firm his promise stands,
E'en when he hides his face;
He trusts in our Redeemer's hands
His glory and his grace.

Then why, my soul, these sad complaints,
Since Christ and we are one?
Thy God is faithful to his saints,—
Is faithful to his Son.

Beneath his smiles my heart has liv'd,
And part of heaven possest;
O praise his name for grace receiv'd,
And trust him for the rest.

David's Prayer.—*O satisfy us early with thy mercy.* Psal. xc. 14.

God's Answer.—*Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.* Psal. lxxxi. 10. *For my people shall be satisfied with my goodness.* Jer. xxxi. 14. *The river of God is full of water.* Psal. lxv. 9. *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* Isa. xii. 3. *There is the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.* Zech. xiii. 1.

O MY soul, keep close to the Gospel; there only is a fulness to supply all wants; food for the hungry, and raiment for the naked soul, and everything in plenty. Whosoever will, may come, and be fed and clothed, without money and without price. Therefore let not the law hinder thee from eating and drinking, rejoicing and adorning thyself in a Gospel manner. The law, as one justly observes, brings in a great bill, but nothing wherewith to discharge it. It sets the soul a-working, but so as to neglect the proper nourishment necessary for it. No wonder, therefore, that she is destitute of sufficient strength, that she faints, and never comes to the right mark. There is no such thing as making amends by the law; we must go directly to Christ, and receive first the grace and strength required, out of his fulness, by faith.

Let ev'ry mortal ear attend,
And ev'ry heart rejoice;
The trumpet of the Gospel sounds
With an inviting voice.

Rivers of love and mercy here
In a rich ocean join;
Salvation in abundance flows,
Like floods of milk and wine.

Fear not, daughter of Zion. John xii. 15. *Rejoice greatly and shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation.* Zech. ix. 9. *The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.* Zeph. iii. 15. See also Isa. liv. 12; Jer. xv. 19.

THOUGH Satan be endeavouring to bind his chains fast about thee, though thy heart quake and be ready to fail for the many sins that encompass it, though destruction and death be in thy way, yet fear not—"Behold thy King cometh;" trust him, he will restrain, he will defend. How strong soever thine inward enemies, thy corruptions, may be now, fear not, and be not discouraged. Thy King is bound by his office, love, and promise, to help thee with strength to overcome. Even the hardships of a Christian work together for his good in this world, and brighten his crown of glory in the world to come. Too oft, instead of casting and laying a burden upon the Lord by faith at once, we parley with temptation, and undertake to heal ourselves by a thousand false contrivances; the effect of which is to make a conflict long that might have been short. 2 Chron. xvi. 7–9. Lord, give me grace to be watchful, and to keep on the armour of faith, that as I pass from conflict to conflict, I may pass on conquering and to conquer, daily pressing forward, and experiencing Jesus every hour my mighty King and Saviour.

Rejoice, the Lord is King,
Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore.

Thou shalt not be afraid of them, but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and all Egypt. Deut. vii. 18. *Be ye not terrified because of them, for the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.* Chap. xx. 3, 4. *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.* Job xxxviii. 11.

"THE Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters; yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Psal. xciii. 4. He controls the strength of nations, and the most powerful empires are as grasshoppers in his sight. Those, therefore, who trust in him have nothing to fear. Shall we not then seek for his strength to overcome the assaults of sin? for let us remember, the assaults of original sin will ever return; and we must not be surprised when one conflict is over, that another arises. This contest is unavoidable, for the enemy is within us. It makes us more careful and humble to know this, than if we believed that we had only to encounter with sin from without, and not from within: and if we desire to feel less evil in us than God suffers us to have, we may be assured this desire proceeds either from pride, seeking to glory in our own righteousness, or from an impatient wish to get rid of the trouble of striving always against sin; whereas it should be enough fo us that God suffers it, lays it not to our charge, ar carries us through all dangers,

Let the redeemed of the Lord
The wonders of his grace record,
Israel, the nation which he chose,
And rescued from their mighty foes.

Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. Isa. xlv. 15. *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.* Ps. xxv. 10. *The Lord of hosts is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.* Isa. xxviii. 29. *O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.* Ps. xcii. 5.

GOD is wonderful in all his doings; his ways are past finding out. At the end we can see best the wise and gracious steps he took with us; therefore, when things take such a wonderful turn that we are quite at our wit's end, and do not know which way to go, we may believe the hand of the Lord is in it, and some good will come of it at last. As we experience the name of Christ to be wonderful at such times, we may well expect that he will show himself to be our counsellor and mighty God also. At first, everything may seem to be against us, and go quite contrary; but at last, we see plainly that it was highly needful it should go contrary to our corrupt nature, and that thus it went well; for though the ways of God are marvellous, yet they are glorious.

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Ex. xx. 8. *I was in the spirit on the Lord's day.* Rev. i. 10.

READER, may God bless this meditation to thy soul. Perhaps thou art a careless sinner, who hast trifled with Sabbaths. O do not profane the Lord's Day any more! but if thou valuest thy soul, attend upon his worship, and desire to be "in the spirit on his day;" then wilt thou see and feel thy malady; look to Jesus for pardon, and Sabbath-days will become precious to thy soul. Perhaps thou art a self-righteous Pharisee, punctual in outward services —so far is praiseworthy; but awful is thy mistake, if thou make any outward service the ground of thy acceptance, especially as the language of the day is, "In the Lord alone have I righteousness and strength;" and so wilt thou say, if "in the spirit." Or thou mayest have been a splendid professor, but now a grievous backslider. O may thou be "in the spirit on the Lord's Day," then thou wilt look to God for pardon, to Jesus for fresh sprinklings of his blood, and to the Spirit for his quickening influences. If thou art a believer under sharp trials, mayest thou be "in the spirit;" then, when tribulations abound, consolations may abound also. If thou art a believer walking close with God, rich in knowledge and experience, thou wilt wish to be "in the spirit," that grace may be magnified, Jesus more loved, and his name more honoured. Reader, whatever thou art, if thou wish to be "in the spirit," and would have thy temporal and spiritual concerns prosper, make conscience *of keeping* the Sabbath-day holy.

Nehemiah's Prayer.—*Remember me, O my God, for good.* Neh. xiii. 31.
Divine Answer.—*Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him.* Jer. xxxi. 20.

"O MY God, have mercy upon me," is the prayer of every true penitent; and as soon as that prayer ascends to God, scented with the odour of faith, God hears it, and he keeps a bottle for the tears which produced it. Grant, Lord, that I may be enabled daily to offer this prayer, and grant me to bear steadily in mind, that as soon as I appear with my prayers before the Lord, he writes all my petitions in his book of remembrance. Should I not pray much? Yea, O Lord; and though I have many things already in thy book, yet will I give thee occasion to write down more and more every hour. Thus nothing can be forgotten; all will be granted by him. Delays we must expect; but all shall be made up with so much the larger gifts in due time, though the best will be reserved for a blissful eternity.

Now let the Lord my Saviour smile,
And show my name upon his heart;
I would forget my pains a while,
And in the pleasure lose the smart.

Dear Lord, imprint upon my breast,
And in the book of life my name;
I'd rather have it *there* impress'd
Than in the bright records of fame.

And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow; of wines on the lees well refined. Isa. xxv. 6. See also Psalm xxiii. Matt. viii. 11.

A FEAST bespeaks plenty, harmony, and joy. Many feasts were appointed under the law, in commemoration of various deliverances and mercies. The gospel appoints one great perpetual festival, in consequence of the one grand blessing, which comprehends all other mercies—"Redemption by the blood of Christ." The table is always spread, the company are always welcome, the season is always pleasant, and the joy is always new. Lord, I was once feeding upon husks, upon ashes, upon the wind, and drinking down iniquity like water; but, O wonderful love! thou didst invite and bring me to thine own feast! Thou feedest me with the bread of life, and causest me to drink of the wine of thy consolation. May I never more have an appetite for the vanities of the world, but may I always have the Lord for my shepherd, leading me by green pastures, and by the still waters; and may I, from sitting at his table in this wilderness, rise and go to sit at that table which is for ever spread in heaven, at which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are guests, and where Jesus, my Redeemer, is for ever present.

Why was I made to hear thy voice,
And enter while there's room,
When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?

He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. Gen. xv. 6. Rom. iv. 5.

IT is no uncommon thing in Scripture to put the act for the object, especially with regard to faith and hope. Thus hope signifies the object of hope, Jer. xiv. 9. 1 Tim. i. 1. Heb. vi. 18. And faith is often put for the object, or doctrine of faith, or that which is believed in; as when it is said, Paul preached the faith which once he destroyed; and Felix heard him concerning the faith of Christ; and when the Scripture speaks of keeping and contending for the faith. Thus, when Abraham is said to believe in the Lord, the meaning is, he believed in the promise of God, that he should have a seed, and a very numerous one; he believed that the Messiah would spring from his seed; he believed in him as his Saviour and Redeemer; he believed in him for righteousness; and he believed in his righteousness as justifying him before God. It was not the act of his faith, but the object of it, not the promise he believed, but what was promised, and his faith received even Christ and his righteousness. See this explained fully in Rom. iv. 3, 10, 22–24. Reader, mark well how Abraham was justified before God, not by faith as a work, but as apprehending Christ, and follow this example of the father of the faithful. It is by faith in Jesus Christ alone that we can be justified before God; by faith all the Old Testament saints were justified, as well as the New. This distinguishes the Christian religion from all systems of morality; and to err in this, is to err in the fundamentals of Christianity.

This do in remembrance of me. Luke xxii. 19.

COME, my soul, obey thy dying Lord's command let it be thy delight, as it is thy privilege, t attend thy Master at table, to take a nearer view o his bleeding love, and, by a renewed act of faith obtain a fresh taste and renewed pledge of the precious benefits contained therein. Stagger not through unbe lief; it is a blessed truth, Jesus died for sinners; this is the foundation of a sinner's hope. Let this encour age thee, O my soul; thou art a sinner, guilty and defiled. Jesus' blood cleanses from all sin; he is the fountain opened for thy uncleanness. Thou art by nature a child of wrath, condemned by the law, exposed to the curse; but Jesus was made a curse for thee: thou art unrighteous, unholy; but Jesus is made of God unto thee righteousness and sanctification: thou art weak, beset with enemies; his strength shall be perfected in thy weakness, and thou, by faith shalt be more than conqueror through him that loved thee. Thou art afraid of perishing at the last; look to Jesus; he purchased thee with his blood; he will not give thee up; none can pluck thee out of his hand. Rise, then, O my soul, and come to the banquet of love, and partake of the blessings of the everlasting covenant; beseech the Lord to manifest his love, seal thy pardon, renew thy strength, and enable thee to travel the remaining part of thy pilgrimage till thou come to Mount Zion, and be admitted a welcome *guest* at the marriage-supper in heaven.

APRIL 20.

I write unto you, little children, because your sins
you for his name's sake; to you, fathers, bec
known him that is from the beginning; to you
because ye have overcome the wicked one. 1 Jo

GOD has more communion with some o than others. Out of the multitud twelve, out of the twelve he chose three, the three he chose John to be his peculiar bosom favourite, of whom it is said five t John's gospel, that "he was the disciple w loved." So now at this day, God hath his live upon milk and nothing else; he has ch who know their Father and are assured o moreover, he has his young men, who go and fight the Lord's battles victoriously; fathers in Israel, who abound in gray-hea ence and wisdom; for they knew him from ning, and they remembered his words. It mercy to be one of God's little ones, yea, t all; to be a star, though not of the first to be a disciple, though not one of the thr of the twelve, nor one of the seventy. E John, a darling, and to lean on his breas his bosom, O how great a mercy! It is be new-born, to be taken into the family o household of faith; but to grow up to a per to be a man in Christ Jesus, O how grea Lord, thou knowest my desire, perfect that cerns thy servant.

Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering. Gen. xxii. 2.

ABRAHAM desired earnestly to see into the mystery of redemption, and God let Abraham by experience, something of the depth of that mystery: Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, staff of thine age, the hope of thy family, and him up for a burnt-offering; and in this transac see my love to sinners, in giving up my only Son J a sacrifice for them. Abraham obeyed; he virtu sacrified his son; a ram was substituted in his pl and blessings were poured upon the faithful patria In the whole story we have a lively type of gre things. We have seen the day when God spared his own Son, when he was bound with cords, w he bore his cross, and on this mountain, probably this very spot, was offered up an offering for when he, triumphant over the grave, rose again live for evermore, and saw his seed, even his redeem people, whom no man can number, and whose pos sions are the glories of eternity. My soul, think these things. Art thou a son of Abraham? Is th in thine heart a darling sin? Draw forth the k and smite it away. Hath God not spared his Son me, and shall I spare what he commands me to sa fice? No, gracious Saviour, no. Help me to k back nothing from thee. Search my heart, and w thou hast tried me, crown the faith thou hast bestow and the obedience thou hast wrought, with that un *ing* glory thou hast promised to the faithful.

who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us ether with Christ; (by grace ye are saved); and hath ised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly ces in Christ Jesus. Eph. ii. 4–6.

IRIST being the head of the body, his Church, all who are his real members, are, together with dead, buried, raised up, and seated in heavenly es; for he is the new Adam, and has done all e things as our representative, in our stead, and ur good. Therefore, a true believer may rejoice say, I have suffered in thee, O my glorious , for all my sins already. I am discharged. I no punishment to fear any more respecting the and curse of sin. Thou hast fully answered the ge against me, satisfied the infinite justice of for me, and it is impossible, with his equity and to require a double payment of my debts; con- ently, I die no more; nay, I live already, and my place with thee eternally in heaven, since head cannot, nor will ever part even with the est of his members, but influence and draw them him wherever he goes.

O Lord, we praise thee for thy Son,
Who joined our nature to his own:
The second Adam, from the dust,
Raises the ruins of the first.

By the rebellion of one man,
Through all the seed the mischief ran;
And by one man's obedience now,
Are all his seed made righteous too.

God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* Rom. iv. 5. See also Gen. xv. 6.

THESE are very sweet and precious words to those who look upon their own best virtues and performances by nature as sinful, and upon their best condition by grace as extremely weak and imperfect. How comfortable a thing is the justification of the penitent by faith, when the soul is first stripped quite naked before God, and thoroughly convinced of its wickedness and weakness. A merely moral man does not meddle with this. He pretends to make amends for his former sins by altering his course, and doing better works; but this is not making amends at all, since we are but unprofitable servants, and want continually forgiveness of sin, even when we have done all. There is but one way to be justified, and to obtain and preserve the blessing of a good conscience, which is by humbling and confessing ourselves guilty, and looking only for forgiveness and righteousness in Christ. Thus we are made by him the righteousness of God itself. May the Lord put us all in this way!

No more, my God, I boast no more
Of all the duties I have done;
I quit the hopes I held before,
To trust the merits of thy Son.

O yes, I must and will esteem
All things but loss for Jesus' sake;
O may my soul be found in him,
And of his righteousness partake!

h God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and ur, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of Acts v. 31. *Unto you first, God, having raised up his sus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one from his iniquities.* Acts iii. 26.

not, What reason have I to repent? I am no rderer or robber; for thou art both. By thy u hast murdered the Son of God, and by thy bbed God of his due service; therefore, if thy rt be not changed into a new one, and yet l some uneasiness about thy salvation, do not this concern as a fit of the vapours, or as a ion of the devil, but believe it is the work of who now awakes thee from the sleep of sin, rs thee repentance; and who will change thy nd make thee a new man, if thou canst thyself unto him; he stands at the door and and says, "If any man hear my voice and e door, I will come in to him and will sup n." Rev. iii. 20.

Now Christ will ev'ry want supply,
And fill our hearts with peace;
He gives, by cov'nant and by oath,
The riches of his grace.

Our heart, that flinty, stubborn thing,
That terrors cannot move,
That fears no threat'nings of his wrath,
Shall be dissolved by love.

There shall his sacred Spirit dwell,
And deep engrave his law,
And ev'ry motion of our souls
To swift obedience draw.

God is not the author of confusion. 1 Cor. xiv. 33. *He hath made everything beautiful in his time. No man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.* Eccles. iii. 11.

O LORD, I am like a little child, knowing neither the beginning nor end of my ways. I daily go in a strange path, the sides whereof are vanity, and the end destruction. I see not my way in it, yet my wicked heart tells me not to leave it. One pleasure after another bids me stay, yet the sweets thereof I never taste. I am weary of it; it is a perplexing path. But thou, who art the Wonderful Counsellor, make it my only wisdom to be advised and ruled by thee. O show me, then, always thy way in all things, even in the least, that I may never miss to do thy work in due season and due order. Make me such a faithful steward, as not to go one inch from thy will, but on all occasions to act and suffer according to thy pleasure.

Whither, O whither shall I fly,
 But to my loving Saviour's breast,
Secure within thy arms to lie,
 And safe beneath thy wings to rest?

I have no might t' oppose the foe,
 But everlasting strength is thine;
Show me the way that I should go;
 Show me the path I should decline.

Which shall I leave, and which pursue?
 Thou only my adviser be;
My God, I know not what to do;
 But oh, mine eyes are fixed on thee.

Now he who establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* 1 John ii. 20.

A SENSIBLE joy of faith, and great delight in prayer, are not the only evidences of this earnest and sealing of the Spirit; these sometimes are wanting when we know we are sealed by these marks, namely, when we receive Christ in all his offices, and have a sincere desire to do the will of God in all things; when we love the ordinances of Christ, and regard the children of God with a brotherly affection, and seek to do them good; when we hate sin, and watch and pray against it; and, lastly, when we are poor in spirit, vile in our own eyes, and are led into further acquaintance with Christ himself, and with his gospel by the Spirit. These are constant marks even for the weakest.

Why should the children of a king
 Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend, and bring
 Some tokens of thy grace.

Dost thou not dwell in all thy saints,
 And seal the heirs of heaven?
When wilt thou banish my complaints,
 And show my sins forgiven,

Assure my conscience of her part
 In the Redeemer's blood,
And bear thy witness with my heart
 That I am born of God?

Christian's Prayer.—*God be merciful to me a sinner.* Luke xviii. 13. *Look upon mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.* Ps. xxv. 18.

Divine Answer.—*The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, and of great mercy; the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.* Ps. cxlv. 8, 9. *My son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.* Matt. ix. 2.

JUSTIFICATION or remission of sins before the tribunal of God, and the comfortable assurance of it in the heart, do not always go together. The pardon is passed in heaven at once, and in the most perfect manner, yet the sense of it may be wanting; for the assurance of that pardon is mostly given by degrees, as believers are able to receive it. Feeble glimpses appear now and then; and many love-tokens usually pass between Christ and a believing soul, before the Spirit gives a full and clear witnes to his conscience. Therefore a penitent soul mu converse much with the gospel, and pray continual for more light, and a greater degree of faith a peace. It must narrowly scrutinise its own feeli and desires, and bring these, at all times, to the of the Bible, and in this work the glimmerings of dawn of assured hope will begin to dispel its d ness.

O God of mercy, hear my call;
My load of guilt remove:
Break down this separating wall
That bars me from my love.
Give me the presence of thy grace;
Then my rejoicing tongue
Shall speak aloud thy righteousness,
And make thy praise my song.

Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Ps. xxxvii. 4. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.* Ps. lv. 22. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* Prov. xvi. 3.

IF thou desirest to delight thyself only in the Lord, and art more solicitous for the increase of faith, love, and holiness than temporal happiness, and wouldst even part with some earthly good, provided it would enlarge thy spiritual welfare,—this comes not from nature, but is an infallible mark of grace and regeneration; and the Lord shall give thee also the desires of thine heart, and even more than thou desirest. Nothing can be more foolish than to harbour one or more secret lusts in our hearts, after we have been once awakened. We must certainly suffer for it: our conscience will check us; we cannot enjoy it with half the pleasure as before; our course is hindered, and our peace disturbed. How much more prudent and profitable, then, would it be to forsake all and follow Christ straight, who only can satisfy the desires of our heart. Consider this, O my soul; act the wiser part; let thine eye be single, and cleave to him alone; while others, seeking to serve two masters, God and Mammon, are woefully disappointed at last; avoid thou this folly; and be wholly for Christ. Thus thou wilt be able to taste the kisses of his mouth, and the crystal streams of his comfortable and heavenly love.

Dear Saviour, let thy beauties be
My soul's eternal food;
And grace command my heart away
From all created good.

Jeremiah's Prayer.—*Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed.* Jer. xvii. 14.

Divine Answer.—*I am the Lord that healeth thee.* Exod. xv. 26. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* Matt. ix. 12. *I have seen his ways, and will heal him.* Isa. lvii. 18; liii. 5; and lxi. 1.

CHRIST'S healing all bodily sickness was a token of his power and grace to heal all spiritual diseases of our souls, though ever so dangerous. Therefore, give thyself only up to his care; he understands thy distemper also, and will certainly restore thee. He has healed a great many already, nay, all those who ever desired it, of all their infirmities. Thou canst never be too miserable and bad for him; he is ever willing and able to help. The worse thy case is, the more he will pity thee and have patience. Before we can be made whole, his way is to make us thoroughly sensible of our sickness, and lay our wounds more and more open. But, as the physician then is most wanted, we must be the more earnest to implore his help, and he will surely bind us up again and heal us; not at once, but by degrees; often slowly and wonderfully, yet thoroughly at last; for he heals all, even the most incurable diseases. Psa. ciii. 3.

Bind up, O Lord, and cheer my soul
With thy forgiving love;
O make my broken spirit whole,
And bid my pains remove.

Let not thy Spirit quite depart,
Nor drive me from thy face;
Create anew my vicious heart,
And fill it with thy grace.

Confess your faults one to another. James v. 16.

IT is related of St. John the Evangelist, that he was once set upon by a company of thieves, amongst whom was a young man, their captain. To him St. John applied himself by way of wholesome counsel and advice, which took so good effect, that he was converted, and went to all his fellow-thieves, and besought them, in the name of Jesus Christ, to walk no longer in their wicked ways. He told them, that he was troubled in conscience for his former wicked life, and earnestly entreated them, as they regarded the welfare of their own souls, to leave off their old courses. The counsel was good, and well taken, so that many of them became converts. Thus one sinner's confession of his faults to another, may happily prove the conversion of one by the other. Hence that precept, "Confess your faults one to another," is thus interpreted by some:—That those who have been partners together in sin, should go and seriously confess their sins each to the other. He that hath been a drunkard, or any otherwise a wicked liver, let him go to his companions in iniquity, and tell them that he is troubled in mind because of his former excess, and he may be a mean of converting them. Reader, Art thou converted? follow this method: go to thy old companions, warn them of their danger, and thou wilt either be a mean of converting them, or hereby get rid of their troublesome company. Again, he who has injured another, should confess his fault to that other, as well as to God, and beg forgiveness from both.

David's Prayer.—*Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant.* Ps. cxliii. 2.

Divine Answer. — *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my voice, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* John v. 24. See also chap. viii. 51. Isa. xxv. 8.

SINCE the Judge himself is our brother, our bridegroom, the Lord of death and life, yea, even our life, believers cannot die eternally, because "they are passed from death unto life." Whoso owns the justice of God's judgment, confesses himself guilty in all things, and appeals from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat, him the Lord will own and justify through the righteousness of his Son; for, "if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." Nay, we shall even sit in judgment together with Christ. 1 Cor. vi. 2. And surely in that day we shall not pass a sentence of condemnation on ourselves, much less will Christ; for he loves us more than we do ourselves. O let us then humble ourselves before God, and come as condemned criminals to his seat of mercy, for pardon and for grace to help in the time of need.

Who shall the Lord's elect condemn?
'Tis God that justifies their souls:
And mercy, like a mighty stream,
O'er all their sins divinely rolls.

Who shall adjudge the saints to hell?
'Tis Christ that suffer'd in their stead!
And their salvation to fulfil,
Behold him rising from the dead.

miah's Prayer.—*Give heed to me, O Lord; and hearken to the voice of them that contend with thee.* Jer. xviii. 19.
ivine Answer.—*Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Ps. cxxi. 4. *Casting all your care upon God, for he careth for you.* 1 Pet. v. 7. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.* Psalm lv. 22.

WHATEVER cares and anxieties perplex the people of God, whether they be temporal or spiritual, whether they be great or small, also concern God. He knows their afflictions; he knows their anxieties. The care of our Lord, which he takes for his little ones, infinitely exceeds the care of the most tender mother over her weak and helpless child. Then, whilst I feel and own myself weak, foolish, and wretched, the Lord being the guardian of such babes, he will have patience with me, for they are the vessels of his grace. Knowing myself, therefore, to be always a weak and ignorant child, I will labour to keep close to Jesus in waiting and prayer. And since he is the minister of the sanctuary, he will never let me want anything that is good for me, but will defend me, and feed me, and train me up in the best and most suitable manner.

Be thou my counsellor,
My pattern and my guide,
And through this desert land,
Still keep me near thy side.
O let my feet ne'er run astray,
Nor rove, nor seek the crooked way.

Should all the hosts of death,
And powers of hell unknown,
Put their most dreadful forms
Of rage and mischief on,
I shall be safe, for Christ displays
Superior power and guardian grace.

man, Now we believe; not because of thy iv. 42. *If so be ye have tasted that the* 1 Pet. ii. 3.

nt thing to know assuredly that the such a witness as experience, and al correspondence between the saints between the believer and Christ. h out of the common road of the not awakened can have no experi-l, and therefore it is often ridiculed oh! what an empty thing would ut experience, and a heart-felt know-! Experience is the sure and secret ie Christian knoweth the Scripture is leth his own interest in Christ; he helped out of a dark plunge by the ord on his heart. O what an ex-er is experience! taste and see, for Christian getteth a view of the Scrip-l things, which the most subtle and nsanctified schoolmen cannot reach. l cxvi. 10. 2 Tim. i. 12. Gal. ii. This cannot be found in books; he wise and disputer of this world, st and simplest Christian understands press after experience; live not by e comforts of others, but seek to the uld give thee this inward testimony; in future trials, remove many of thy passage through life easy and com-as a pledge of thy future glory.

Whosoever will come after me, let him deny
up his cross daily, and follow me; for wh
his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall l
sake, the same shall save it. Mark viii. 34
Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not
he cannot be my disciple. Luke xiv. 33.

THIS doctrine is discarded by all
"Lord, Lord, but do not the tl
saith." The language of their heart is,
us smooth things; prophesy deceits."
How different was that of the apostl
I, not as one that beateth the air; bu
my body, and bring it into subjection
any means, when I have preached to o
should be a castaway." 1 Cor. ix. 26,
no crown: let us not then be afraid o
when we bear it, it bears us; and wh
take it up, we refuse the staff of e
pilgrim, and the weapon of every Ch
we renounce the tree of life for that of k
practically deny Jesus Christ and him

Give me, O Lord, a sober mind,
A steady, self-renouncing will,
That tramples down, and casts b
The deadly baits of pleasing ill.

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels thy blo
So freely shed for me.

An humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean,
Which neither life nor death can
From Him that dwells within.



· ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye l ye shall have them. Mark xi. 24. *Verily, › you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in ll give it you. Hitherto ye have asked no- ne; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy* ohn xvi. 23, 24. *But ask in faith, nothing he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea; n think that he shall receive anything of the* . 6, 7.

mised with an oath to give the daughter dias whatever she would ask, even to kingdom. How advantageous was his iow much more so that of the Lord! ive I sworn," says he, "that in bless- ss thee." Gen. xxii. 16, 17. When he does not lay us under a restriction ibove half a kingdom. No; we may ngdom, even the kingdom of heaven, ı of grace and glory. Both are pur- oy the blood of the Lamb; both pro- vers in the word of the gospel; and estowed: grace upon praying souls in tant; glory upon praising souls in the hant. If now we do not enjoy the ace, righteousness, peace, and joy in ist, it is merely because we have not : asked amiss; this is, without faith, ce, or in our own name, and not in the iame of Jesus.

ı, mighty faith, the promise sees,
d looks to Christ alone;
ghs at impossibilities,
d cries, IT SHALL BE DONE.

David's Prayer.—*O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* Psal. xxv. 11.
Divine Answer.—*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* Rom. v. 20. *For God will abundantly pardon.* Isa. lv. 7.

IT is all one with God to forgive a repenting sinner his trespasses, whether great or small, many or few; for they are all paid with one ransom. No sin, properly speaking, is little in itself; and none greater than the grace of God, and the infinite price laid down for it. Whatever sins, therefore, a man feels, yet he may throw himself upon the abounding grace of God: but this grace must always be our comfort, to depend upon it alone, even when it is best with us; for then only it is best with us when we depend alone on grace, and live in it as in our element. The grace of the gospel not only redeems the soul from death, and quickens it to newness of life, but it brings it into a very near relationship with God, and fits it for a full participation of the eternal glory and blessedness which God has in store for those who fear Him.

Why does your face, ye humble souls,
Those mournful colours wear?
What doubts are these that waste your faith
And nourish your despair?

What though your num'rous sins exceed
The stars that fill the skies!
And aiming at th' eternal throne,
Like pointed mountains rise!

See here an endless ocean flows
Of never-failing grace,
Behold a dying Saviour's veins
The sacred flood increase!

David's Prayer.—*Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.* Psal. vi. 2. *And strengthen me with strength in my soul.* Psal. cxxviii. 3.

Divine Answer.—*My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* 2 Cor. xii. 9. *The Lord delighteth not in the strength of a horse; he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.* Psal. cxlvii. 10, 11. The Lord our strength, mighty God and Emmanuel, *will give strength unto his people.* Ps. xxix. 11.

IN whatever part we are weak and most beset by corrupted nature, we may yet be strong enough, through grace, to come off conquerors: therefore, hope against hope, and despair not of overcoming by the power of God, be thy corruptions within, and thy enemies without, ever so strong and obstinate. I am weak, indeed, but Christ is strong; I am poor, he is rich; I am sick, he is the physician of the sick; I am a sinner, he is the Saviour of sinners: consequently he suits me, and I suit him extremely well. But let me look to him daily, seek his face earnestly, and grace to help in every time of need.

Let me but hear my Saviour say,
"Strength shall be equal to thy day;"
Then I rejoice in deep distress,
Leaning on all-sufficient grace.

I glory in infirmity,
That Christ's own power may rest on me;
When I am weak, then I am strong,
Grace is my shield, and Christ my song.

I can do all things, or can bear
All sufferings if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasures mingle with the pains,
While his kind hand my head sustains.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me thy law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgments have I laid before me. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Ps. cxix. 9, 18, 29, 30, 33.

NEITHER the old nor the young can walk uprightly, without taking heed to the word of God; if they depart from that, they soon fall into error and vicious courses; but if they would make the word their rule, they must read it carefully, and pray diligently for the enlightening of the Holy Spirit. If David considered his eyes as shut, how much more should we consider ours so, and pray, "Open thou mine eyes," &c. He who doth not fervently pray thus, is still blind, and hath not an eye; even though he should think himself a profound divine, and be so esteemed by others. Lord, give me to see the wonders both of thy law and gospel, and turn my feet from every crooked path. Let thy commandments be always before me as my guide, and enable me to choose the narrow path of truth, and steadfastly walk in it to the end; for this was David's request throughout this long psalm.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

Then teach me, Lord, the perfect way
Of thy precepts divine,
And to observe it to the end
I shall my heart incline.



David's Prayer.—*Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.* Ps. xxvii. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name.* Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

Divine Answer.—*Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way. What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.* Ps. xxv. 8, 12.

O LORD, be pleased to fulfil this gracious promise in me also. Thou hast inclined my heart to do thy will, and yet I am often in darkness about thy will. Here it is written, "Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way." It is thy own word; I may depend upon it, and would plead it with thee. Many times thou hast fulfilled this promise already; thou art willing and able to do it evermore for thy own name's sake. Thou art ever mindful of thy word, and I would keep close unto it. Then let thy spirit well explain thy word, and write it on my heart, enabling me to understand, to love and practise it.

I lift my soul to God,
 My trust is in his name;
Let not my foes that seek my blood
 Still triumph in my shame.

Sin and the powers of hell
 Persuade me to despair;
Lord, let me know thy cov'nant well,
 That I may 'scape the snare.

The Lord is just and kind;
 The meek shall learn his ways;
And every humble sinner find
 The methods of his grace.

David's Prayer.—*Turn again our captivity, O Lord.* Ps. cxxvi. 4.

Divine Answer.—*The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* Isa. lxi. 1. *For thus saith the Lord, &c. I will give thee for a covenant to the people, &c., that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves; they shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places; they shall not hunger nor thirst.* Isa. xlix. 8–10. See also chap. xxxv. 10.

O LORD, I am hungering after the righteousness and freedom, not only of faith, but of holiness also; not that I may make holiness the foundation of hope, but the evidence of faith; and that I may be able to rejoice and take comfort of thy righteousness alone, without deceiving my soul. Grant, therefore, that I may be truly filled, and may be strong, easy, and free, so as to be kept no longer in any of the most subtle bonds, either of the law, unbelief, and a bad conscience, or of a worldly mind!

Buried in shadows of the night,
We lie till Christ restore the light;
Wisdom descends to heal the blind,
And chase the darkness from the mind.

Jesus beholds where Satan reigns,
Binding his slaves in heavy chains;
He sets the prisoners free, and breaks
The iron bondage from our necks.

Poor helpless worms in thee possess
Grace, wisdom, power, and righteousness;
Thou art our mighty ALL, and we
Give our whole selves, O Lord, to thee.

David's Prayer.—*How long wilt thou hide thy face from me, O Lord?* Ps. xiii. 1.
Divine Answer.—*For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee, &c.* Isa. liv. 7—9.

WHEN the Lord is pleased to quicken us in our prayers with a lively impression of one or more promises, we are apt to think that the hour of his help is come. But afterwards, it may be, he not only hides himself for a great while again, but things take even such a strange and contrary course, as if all had been nothing, or as if nothing were more uncertain than the word of God, nay, even than God himself. They who deny such temptations, are strangers both to themselves and to the devices of Satan. But Christians must then be prudently upon their guard, thinking that God is going to do some glorious things for them; for if they be first more deeply convinced of their utter unworthiness, if they act with faith and patience, and be more earnest in prayers, they are fit to receive so much more grace afterwards. Though yet, after all, God, as a sovereign, will give such measures of grace at such seasons, and to such persons, as he pleases.

Dear Lord, behold our sore distress;
Our sins attempt to reign;
Stretch out thine arm of conq'ring grace,
And let thy foes be slain.

If thou despise a mortal groan,
Yet hear a Saviour's blood;
An advocate so near the throne
Pleads and prevails with God.

David's Prayer.—*How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?* Ps. xiii. 1.

Divine Answer.—*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.* Isa. xlix. 15, 16.

THE wickedness and the evil of our hearts, and the great heap of our actual trangressions which we daily transgress against the Lord, are no easy matters to get rid of. We need to wrestle and strive like Jacob, and hold the Lord till he bless us with his pardoning and his purifying grace. Were all our sins and afflictions easily to be prayed away with a few words, whence these sad and repeated complaints of David? Why should God advise us to wait for him, and persevere in hope? And how could faith and patience be exercised? In our closets we may be lifted up with high speculations, seem to be strong, and able to leap over all the walls; but in great distress we see how dejected and distrusting our hearts often are (Ps. xxx. 7, 8), but the Lord preserves us.

Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above,
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be;
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet, I love thee, and adore;
O for grace to love thee more!

David's Prayer.—*Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths.* Ps. xxv. 4.
Moses' Prayer.—*Shew me now thy way, that I may know thee.* Ex. xxxiii. 13.
Divine Answers.—*I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye,* Ps. xxxii. 8. *My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.* Ex. xxxiii. 14.

O LORD, suffer me not to step aside one inch from thy way, much less to fall away from thee, the true vine and fortress of my soul, by the plausible insinuations of my own brain and imagination. May I never run, before thou hast called me, to the hurt of my soul; but constantly and confidently abide in thee, always drawing first the necessary light and strength from thee, by never-ceasing supplications. Grant that, my eye being fixed continually upon thee, I may be guided into all truth, my doings being attended with thy blessing, and may my whole life be a constant progress towards Heaven.

CHRIST'S ANSWER.—I will keep thee as the apple of mine eye, that no evil shall come near thee. As a careful mother watches over her child, so have I undertaken to teach thee my path, and guide thee with my own eyes. Whatever faintings and failings may befall thee, yet will I be ever faithful, raising thee up again, and leading thee on evermore in thy ways. Nay, as a good shepherd, I will carry thee in my own arms whenever thy increasing weakness shall require.

My honour is engaged to save
The meanest of my sheep;
All that my heavenly Father gave,
My hands securely keep.

By these (words), my son, be admonished. Eccles. xii. 12. *But, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* 1 Pet. ii. 2.

NEW-BORN babes must not self-conceitedly be desirous of high things, and strong meat. Such have more need experimentally to understand the first oracles of Christ, and taste the milk and saving power of the gospel. This would best make them grow in grace, and wean them from the world; since a sucking child esteems nothing else in comparison of its mother's breast; and those that delight in more lofty vain imaginations than the Bible, do not follow the right spirit, and at last must come to their catechism again; for the more a Christian is approaching to his end, and desires to be duly prepared for heaven, the more he walks in deep humility and godly simplicity, placing himself on the lowest bench of weak and little children. And thus they are the fittest vessels of grace; they will certainly be enlightened, and have the mystery of Christ revealed in their hearts. Matt. xi. 25.

There was an hour when Christ rejoiced,
And spoke his joy in words of praise;
Father, I thank thee, mighty God,
Lord of the earth, and heaven, and seas!
I thank thy sov'reign power and love,
That crowns my doctrine with success;
And makes the babes in knowledge learn
The height, the breadth, the length of grace.
But all his glory lies concealed
From men of prudence and of wit;
The prince of darkness blinds their eyes;
And their own pride resists the light.

I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c., that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened, &c. Eph. iii. 14–16. Read on to verse 21.

THIS is a prayer, and a form fit to be used by all Christians. It may be used as a daily prayer; we should offer it up in faith, without apprehending that the favour we ask is too great. God will do exceedingly more for us than we can either ask or understand. Whatever we ask, he will grant us still more; for though we are sinners, yet Jesus hath received gifts even for sinners; and to every one of us (v. 7) is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, that we may enjoy all things richly, Christ being rich towards all them that call upon him. O God, thou art our Father, reconciled to us in Christ; grant us therefore power, great power, according to the riches of thy glory, not according to the narrowness of our hearts. We stand in need of great power, for we have great enemies. Strengthen us by thy Spirit, Lord Jesus; do thou dwell in our hearts, and grant us to be rooted in thy love, that we may know it more and more, and that it may be shed abroad in our hearts, and that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.

To thee, my God, I daily sigh,
 But not for golden stores;
Nor covet I the brightest gem
 On the rich eastern shores.

Nor pleasure's soft enticing charms
 My fond desires allure;
Far greater things than earth can yield,
 My wishes would secure.

Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Therefore, *remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Ps. cxix. 11, 38; and ver. 6, 32, 49.

"THAT the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives." Gospel-comforts sweetly and powerfully urge us to obedience; and law-terrors check us from resting on that obedience. Both are needful to guard us from security and legality. Whosoever despises or neglects obedience, entertains a false notion of the gospel, and is running headlong into licentiousness and ruin; and he who relies on his obedience to justify him, defeats the design of the gospel, and frustrates the grace of God, making it of no effect. May the Lord lead and guide us in the right way!

Laden with guilt, and full of fears,
I fly to thee, my Lord;
And not a glimpse of hope appears
But in thy written word.

This is the judge that ends the strife,
Where wit and reason fail;
My guide to everlasting life,
Through all this gloomy vale.

O! may thy counsels, mighty God,
My roving feet command;
Nor I forsake the happy road
That leads to thy right hand!

Through the law I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 19, 20.

CHRIST being our head, in whom all fulness dwells, he will certainly fill all his members with life and strength, according to his promise, John xiv. 19, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" and chap. xvii. 3, "This is eternal life, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." To know Christ, and God in Christ, as love, is true light and life; he that has this has enough. O the excellency of the knowledge of Christ! O Lord, teach me to know thee as the bridegroom of my soul, that the law may not rush into my conscience, now thy bride-chamber, and condemn me any more! I desire to be devoted to thee alone. Rom. vii. 4. Grant, therefore, that my whole heart and life, all my words and actions, may be governed only by a living faith on thee, who hast loved and given thyself for me.

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell,
By faith and love in every breast;
Then shall we know, and taste, and feel,
The joys that cannot be express'd.

Come fill our hearts with inward strength,
Make our enlarged souls possess,
And learn the height, and breadth, and length
Of thine unmeasurable grace.

Now to the God whose power can do
More than our thoughts or wishes know,
Be everlasting honours done,
By all the Church, through Christ his Son!

David's Confession.—*I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.* Ps. cix. 22.

Divine Answer.—*I know thy poverty, but thou art rich.* Rev. ii. 9. For, *blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Matt. v. 3. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your hearts shall live for ever.* Ps. xxii. 26. *The Lord healeth the broken in heart, the Lord lifteth up the meek.* Ps. cxlvii. 3, 6. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.* Matt. xii. 20.

SUCH are the tender mercies of Christ towards the weakest of his people, that he supplies them from time to time with all proportionable strength, till at last they are able to gain a complete victory. As soon, therefore, as we are sensible of our poverty, or miserable condition, and are desirous of grace and strength to overcome sin, and evidence that desire to be sincere by constant prayer, we have actually some grace and spiritual life, and are delivered already from the jaws of hell; for there is no such feeling in dead souls; and in hell there is only a desire to be delivered from the punishment of sin, but not from sin itself.

Blessed are the humble souls that see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Treasures of grace to them are given,
And crowns of joy laid up in heaven.

Blessed are the men with broken heart,
Who mourn for sin with inward smart;
The blood of Christ divinely flows,
A healing balm for all their woes.

I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. John viii. 12. Therefore, *walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.* Chap. xii. 35.

HE that is faithful, keeping ever close to Christ and his light, strictly watching and obeying the motions of his Spirit, will be evermore tender in conscience, and receive so much more light: consequently, he will be from time to time more deeply rooted in repentance, faith, and assurance, so as either to be preserved from many combats and disorders, or at least be carried sooner through the same. He may meet with dark valleys in his pilgrimage, for nature is covered with darkness, and grace sometimes only glimmers like a spark; yet by degrees it will blaze, and at last break through and enlighten all our darkness. The glory of the Lord is often seen beaming in the cloud.

Is he a star? he breaks the night,
Piercing the shades with dawning light:
I know his glories from afar,
I know the bright, the morning star.

Is he a sun? his beams are grace;
His course is joy and righteousness;
Nations rejoice when he appears,
To chase their clouds and dry their tears.

Nor earth, nor seas, nor sun, nor stars,
Nor heaven his full resemblance bears.
His beauties we can never trace,
Till we behold him face to face.

I am the Lord God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. Isa. xlviii. 17, 18. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* Rev. iii. 20.

HOW often and how variously does the Lord knock at the door of our hearts, by the voice of his word, the voice of his Spirit, or the voice of conscience! But how seldom are we inclined to give him the hearing! We are often so distracted with business or pleasure, that we can hardly observe his voice through the hurry and noise of worldly things, and we are not at home when he knocks, and seeks to take up his abode with us. Well, even now he is knocking by these words. Hearken to his voice and open the door for him directly, since he desires nothing from us that might be grievous; but intends to make our heart a glorious residence and banqueting-room of love, to fill it with heavenly treasure, and give us everything along with himself.

I'll bring him to my mother's home;
Nor does my Lord refuse to come
To Zion's sacred chambers, where
My soul first drew the vital air.

He gives me there his bleeding heart,
Pierced for my sake with deadly smart;
I give my soul to him, and there
Our loves their mutual tokens share.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in me and I in you; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. John xv. 1–5.

O LORD, I trust that this word will have its accomplishment in me also, though as yet I have great reason to be humbled on account of my barrenness. Grant, therefore, that I may always abide in thee faithfully and quietly: since there is everything in thy power, and nothing can be done by our own strength; but as it is thy will, and it tends both to the glory of thy Father and thine own, I depend upon being replenished in due season with fruits of righteousness. O suffer nothing in me which may dishonour thy name, and which would prove hurtful to myself and offensive to others; but whatever thou thinkest as yet fit for me to suffer, let it work for my real good.

How can I sufficiently adore the patience of the Lord, my gracious husbandman, who still bears with me, the weakest of all his branches. He has not cut me off yet, but still dresses me, to bring forth more fruit, though, like a degenerate plant, I have yielded little else but wild grapes. Why, then, shouldst thou grumble, O my heart, at the application of his pruning-knife? It is really for thy good. He is angry only with the degenerate, unfruitful branches. The more these are purged, the more fruit thou shalt bring forth.

Is Christ a vine? his heavenly root
Supplies the boughs with life and fruit.
O let a lasting union join
My soul to him, the Living Vine.

I am glorified in them; I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. John xvii. 10, 26, 23.

CHRIST is the head of his Church, and he is glorified in it, in having it to present to the Father a glorious Church, the members of which are washed clean in his own blood, and are as stones fitly set. Christ loves his Church. He loves the individual members of it, and they derive all their nourishment from him. O glorious promise—how could he love us more! What blessed and intimate union is this! O for such a faith that could always truly believe it! Christ is the vine, believers are the branches; he the bridegroom, they the bride; he the head, they the members of his body, of his very flesh, and very bones, and consequently, one body with him. And who ever hated his own flesh? So in loving and cherishing believers, he loves himself. Eph. v. 28, 29. Whenever he shall cease to love himself, then, and no sooner, shall he cease to love and cherish them also. It is his own delight to do them good, more than the mother that suckles her child.

Lord, what a heaven of saving grace
Shines through the beauties of thy face,
And lights our passions to a flame!
Lord, how we love thy charming name!

When I can say my God is mine,
When I can feel thy glories shine,
I tread the world beneath my feet,
And all that earth calls good and great.



David's Prayer.—*I am weary with my groaning.* Ps. vi. 6.
Divine Answer.—*He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* Isa. xl. 29. *I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.* Jer. xxxi. 25. See also Matt. xii. 20.

HERE Christ is commending his own meekness, both as a pattern for imitation, and as an encouragement for heavy-laden sinners to draw near to him with confidence. And his rest is promised, not for the merit of our labour and humility, but merely for our coming to him and believing in him. He says, "Take my yoke upon you." "But how shall I take it?" says the sinner. "Why," says Christ, "learn of me. Let me be your teacher, and though you are blind and foolish, fretful and forgetful, yea, wholly polluted with sin, I can yet bear with you because I am meek and lowly in heart, not rough and haughty to offenders, as Pharisees usually are, but full of compassion towards them, willing to receive them, and ready to forgive and comfort them," &c. Come, therefore, to him, O sinner, with all thy load of sin and misery, and he will in no wise cast thee out, but receive thee gladly.

Come hither, all ye weary souls,
 Ye heavy-laden sinners, come!
I'll give you rest from all your toils,
 And raise you to my heavenly home.

Bless'd is the man whose shoulders take
 My yoke, and bear it with delight;
My yoke is easy to his neck,
 My grace shall make the burden light!

Prayer.—*I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy t.* Ps. cxix. 176.

nswer.—*Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, ek them out; I will seek that which was lost, and gain that which was driven away; and will bind up hich was broken, and will strengthen that which was* Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 16. *He shall feed his flock like a rd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and them in his bosom.* Isa. xl. 11.

hat is wise in his own conceit, as philosophers isually are, does not pray like David to be after and healed by Jesus Christ; and there- continues, amidst all his boasted wisdom, ignorant of his fallen nature and his ruined But as thou hast given me, O thou good Shep- understand my lost and helpless condition; like a wandering sheep, I can neither find when lost, nor advise myself how to return, I thee to seek, heal, lead, feed, carry, and ien me also, as my various needs require, that ɔe able to say with David, "The Lord is my rd; I shall not want."

My Shepherd will supply my need,
Jehovah is his name;
In pastures fresh he makes me feed,
Beside the living stream.

He brings my wand'ring spirit back
When I forsake his ways;
And leads me, for his mercy's sake,
In paths of truth and grace.

The sure provisions of my God
Attend me all my days;
O may thy house be mine abode,
And all my work be praise!

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant. Gen. xxxii. 10. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* 2 Sam. vii. 18. *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?* Ps. viii. 3, 4.

A SOUL truly humbled highly esteems every favour, and judges itself utterly unworthy of the least, looking upon everything as a free gift, and bestowed only for Jesus Christ's sake. Now, O my dear Father! it is true, in myself I deserve none, no, not the least of thy mercies; but as thou hast graciously looked upon me, and given me thine only Son, who hath purchased all blessings at a high price for sinners, I do believe that goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. Amen. Be it so, holy Father, to thy glory and my everlasting joy!

Now to the power of God supreme
Be everlasting honours given;
He saves from hell (we bless his name),
He calls our wand'ring feet to heaven!

Not for our duties or deserts,
But of his own abounding grace,
He works salvation in our hearts,
And forms a people for his praise.

'Twas his own purpose that began
To rescue rebels doomed to die:
He gave us grace in Christ his Son,
Before he spread the starry sky.

Jesus, the Lord, appears at last,
And makes his Father's counsels known;
Declares the great transaction's past,
And brings immortal blessings down.

I beseech you, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed, &c. Rom. xii. 1, 2. See also 1 Cor. vi. 19.

PRESENTING our bodies a living sacrifice unto God, when attended with serious prayer and reading the Scriptures, is the best means of knowing the will of God. To neglect this, and use other means, is tempting God, and exposing ourselves to the temptations and siftings of the wicked one. We may think ourselves to be divinely convinced by faith of the will of God, though we follow our own imaginations, and spoil the best of our actions. Self-will generally takes quick resolutions, and has a great deal of assurance: whereas God very often leads his people blindly, and takes methods quite different from ours. "He that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. xxviii. 16. Let every one be careful that he does not mistake self-will and plausible representations for divine convictions and assurances of faith; always strictly examine himself first, whether his body, soul, will, affections, are entirely offered up to the good will and pleasure of God; for God requires the service of the whole man, even the sacrificing of our whole selves to him, not only at church, but in all other places, that we do not conform to the world, but be daily transformed by the renewing of our minds.

Though lifted eyes salute the skies,
And bended knees the ground,
Yet God abhors the sacrifice
Where truth cannot be found.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. Isa. lxi. 10.

CHRIST has a garment of the finest work for every saint. It is this garment they must wear; no other will do in the sight of God. Then, O my soul, put on this garment. It is one of unspotted whiteness; thou canst wear it by faith. In vain dost thou dress up and adorn thyself, before thou approachest Christ. To him thou must come, filthy, naked, and miserable as thou art; he will clothe and adorn thee himself; and in this ornament alone thou shalt rejoice. For the very best of our robes and performances are not without spots, but still want to be washed in the blood of Christ, and covered with this ornament. "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. vii. 14. This, and this alone, is the way to enjoy and maintain true peace. This will enable us to rejoice, that our names are written in heaven.

Awake, my heart,—arise, my tongue,
Prepare a tuneful voice;
In God, the life of all my joys,
Aloud will I rejoice.

'Tis he adorned my naked soul,
And made salvation mine;
Upon a poor polluted worm
He makes his grace to shine.

vid's Confession.—*I have sinned against the Lord.* 2 Sam. xii. 13.

vine Answer.—*The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.* 2 Sam. xii. 13. *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.* 1 Cor. xi. 31.

HE that with unfeigned repentance accuses and judges himself, accounting his own righteousness and best doings as filthy rags, and seeks for ercy through Jesus, may expect to receive forgiveness of all his sins at once, though chastisement may llow; for pardons are not bestowed in parcels or arious measures, as spiritual gifts are. God, through hrist, receives the whole person of a penitent sinner to his favour, forgiving both original and actual s in one instant; so that either none or all are given; but though repentance be needful to nble a sinner and to bring him to Christ, yet no ; are forgiven on account of this repentance, but ugh faith alone in the blood of Christ. This tain washes away the guilt of all sins, though so numerous and heinous; for it is written, e blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." 1 i. 7. Come, then, my soul, believe and be d in this fountain.

Show pity, Lord! O Lord, forgive!
Let a repenting rebel live.
Are not thy mercies large and free?
May not a sinner trust in thee?

My lips with shame my sins confess,
Against thy law, against thy grace;
Lord, should thy judgment grow severe,
I am condemned, but thou art clear.

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, &c. Eph. iv. 18, 19.

IF a man be naturally dead, bring a candle into the room, he sees it not; let the sun shine in his face, he perceives not the beauty nor feels the warmth thereof; offer him rich presents, he receives them not; he hath no eye to see them, no heart to desire them, no hand to reach out unto them. Thus it is with one that is spiritually dead. Let the sunshine of the gospel blaze out ever so clear, he sees it not, because he is in darkness; though he live under plentiful means and dispensations, yet he is blind and sottish; offer unto him the rich pearls of the gospel, those rich treasures of grace in Christ Jesus, yet he hath no heart to them, no hand of faith to lay hold upon them; so blind, so sottish, so stupid and senseless is he, that though these rich treasures, these graces, these pearls of the gospel be conveyed unto him in earthen vessels, in a plain and familiar manner, yet he doth not, he cannot apprehend them; judgments do not affright him, and mercies cannot allure or persuade him; yet this creature is all life in the element of sin; he loves it, he pleads for it, he commits it with greediness. This is St. Paul's account of the unconverted Gentiles; and how many such have we under a Christian name! O Lord, exert thy great power, quicken all that are thus dead in trespasses and sins; turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to thine own self. Amen.

David's Declaration.—*I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait.* Ps. cxxx. 5.

Divine Answer.—*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, &c.* Isa. xl. 31. *The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.* Lam. iii. 25.

IT is not enough to utter words which form a prayer, but these words must express the desires and wishes of our heart. Nor is this enough; prayer without expectation is no prayer at all. Unless we desire and eagerly look for the coming of what we have prayed for, how can it be called prayer? it will only be a solemn mocking of God. Therefore, when we have prayed, we must remember to wait also, and to look anxiously for the answer; for this is well pleasing to the Lord, and expressly commanded by him. The more we wait and keep instant in prayer, so much more will he give: nay, he always hears and grants our petitions directly, and lays them up for his children; but that we may not abuse them, he gives the enjoyment only when it is most needful; therefore we may confidently say, such and such gifts I shall have, since I have prayed for them: they are actually laid up for me; and the use and benefit thereof I shall reap in due season, especially in death and in eternity.

My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is his throne;
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on his salvation waits.

Trust him, ye saints! in all your ways,
Pour out your hearts before his face.
When helpers fail and foes invade,
God is our all-sufficient aid.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul. Ps. xciv. 19. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.* 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

A CONTENTED man without afflictions is ready to place his trust and seek comfort in temporal things. Earthly desires crowd upon him, filling his soul with vanity, and he cannot well taste the sweet comforts of God's word, but under the burden of the cross. Here we often enjoy more solid rest than if we were without a cross, and then that word is fulfilled which Christ says, Matt. xi. 30, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Thus our hearts are set against the world, reconciled to heavenly things, and easily separated from many idols which we could not resist nor forsake before. Well then may we bear these salutary burdens, which, when sanctified, will produce present comfort, and soon issue in eternal rest and glory. And since the Lord has promised to give strength sufficient for the day, that we may not be tempted above measure, there is abundant reason again to say that his burden is light indeed, and his yoke is truly easy.

'Tis good for me to wear the yoke,
For pride is apt to rise and swell;
'Tis good to bear my Father's stroke,
That I may learn his statutes well.

Father, I bless thy gentle hand;
How kind is thy chastising rod,
That forced my conscience to a stand,
And brought my wand'ring soul to God!

I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 1 Cor. ii. 2. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments; his praise endureth for ever.* Ps. cxi. 10. *The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* James iii. 17. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* 1 Cor. viii. 1.

CHRIST crucified, and he alone, is the power and wisdom of God; him all Christians, and especially divines, should make it their particular practice to study well. Were our faith built on human wisdom, then surely carnal philosophers would be the greatest believers; whereas they are sometimes the worst infidels, or, at best, the most silly and faithless people in times of distress. And besides, their being puffed up is another evidence that they have not the true wisdom; for the wisdom from above is only with the lowly and babes, who pray for it earnestly. Prov. xi. 2; Matt. xi. 25. What would all knowledge avail us, then, without the knowledge of Christ? One spark of pure love yields more power than all the stores of empty human learning. May the Lord Jesus shed his love abroad in my heart, as whatever others may do, him have I determined only to know, and him have I determined only to serve; his love to the cross I account for my greatest wisdom and glory.

They that would grow divinely wise,
Must with his fear begin:
Our fairest proof of knowledge lies
In hating every sin.

Christian's Prayer.—*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* Gen. xxxii. 26. *Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me.* Ps. xxxviii. 21.

Divine Answer.—*Behold I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.* Gen. xxviii. 15. *I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.* Exodus xxxiii. 12. *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Heb. xiii. 5.

GOD will have me to be faithful; and should not he be so himself? Am I to trust in his word? Then, surely, he will not forsake me, but be as good as his word. Heaven and earth must pass away, but his word will not: he is ever faithful. If I do not believe this, I think blasphemously of God, and can have no help or comfort from his word; but if I truly believe him to be faithful, I believe enough. This is what he only desires; and if I really do, my faith will not be moved even in the hottest trials; the word will hold me up, though I receive it even in weakness. But my faith must be attended with continual prayer.

Begin, my tongue, some heavenly theme,
And speak some boundless thing,
The mighty works, or mightier name,
Of our eternal King.

Tell of his wondrous faithfulness,
And sound his power abroad:
Sing the sweet promise of his grace,
And the performing God.

Proclaim salvation from the Lord
For wretched dying men;
His hand has writ the sacred word
With an immortal pen.

I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Matt. xii. 36. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, &c.* Eph. iv. 29. See also chap. v. 4.

HERE all corrupt communications, jesting, foolish talking, or whatever is not convenient and good to the use of edifying, is plainly forbidden. But who truly believes the report and the truth of these awful words! Surely the world does not believe them at all. This is quite plain, from that very common and shocking practice of judging, lying, swearing, jesting, and talking all manner of filthiness: yea, even religious people very often do not believe and consider them enough. How many heedless, slanderous, idle, and unprofitable words are sometimes spoken by these! Be therefore careful, O my reader, to weigh every word, and to make light of none; for such will increase thine account. Whenever I am going to speak, let the question be first, Is it needful to speak? does it tend to the glory of God? will it profit me or others? O Lord, grant that never an idle word may drop from my lips. Whenever I am to converse with others, give me grace first to converse with thee by secret prayer. In all companies let thy presence be before mine eyes, always looking upon thee as the chief person in the place, and receiving direction when and what I am to speak. May thy good Spirit always teach me, and sanctify all my thoughts and words.

Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. 1 Cor. vii. 20.

MOST of the employments of life are in their own nature lawful; and all those that are so may be made a substantial part of our duty to God, if we engage in them only so far, and for such ends, as are suitable to beings who are to live above the world. This is the only measure of our application to any worldly business; it must have no more of our hands, our hearts, and our time, than is consistent with a hearty, daily, careful preparation of ourselves for another life. For since all true Christians have renounced this world to prepare themselves, by daily devotion and universal holiness, for an eternal state of quite another nature, they must look upon worldly employments as upon worldly wants and bodily infirmities; things not to be desired, only to be endured and suffered, till death and the resurrection have carried us to an eternal state of real happiness. A person's being called into the kingdom of grace, is not designed to make void the duties that arise from his peculiar calling or situation in life, but to enforce the practice of them in such a way as may be most to the glory of God. He, therefore, that does not consider the things of this life as of little moment, or even nothing in comparison of the things that are eternal, cannot be said either to feel or believe the greatest truths of Christianity.

Lord, save me from my calling's snare,
From fraud and from the love of gain;
My hand be filled with worldly care,
But all my heart with thee remain.

And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down; and the haughtiness of man shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Isa. ii. 17. *I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and I will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.* Isa. xiii. 11. *The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.* Rev. xix. 6.

"PRIDE was not made for man," says the son of Sirac; "and the proud in heart are an abomination to the Lord;" and yet what is more common than pride and self-righteousness among the fallen children of Adam? So deeply are they ingrafted in our corrupt natures, that nothing short of almighty grace can root them up. It is the great design and effect of the blessed gospel, wherever it is applied to the heart by the Spirit of God, to mortify this cursed temper. In that day the haughtiness of man, his self-will, which he set up in opposition to the will of God, shall be brought down; and his self-righteousness, by which he thought to recommend himself to the favour of God, shall be made low; and Christ and his righteousness alone shall be exalted.

Hath this precious promise ever been fulfilled in thy experience, O my soul? Is the will of God thy rule? is the righteousness of Christ thy hope? and is the language of thy heart and life, Let God in all things be exalted in me, and by me, through Christ Jesus? Without this, O my soul, thy profession is vain, thy faith is also vain, and thou art yet in thy sins. Grant, O Lord, that I may be humble in heart and soul.



I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. 1 Chron. xxix. 17. *The Lord looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

AS God searches the heart and tries the reins, he cannot be deceived by outward form; we ought not therefore to deceive ourselves in this particular. It is no certain proof of a real conversion to God, if we only reform the grosser sins of our former lives, much less if we only abstain from such things as by nature we are not so much inclined to indulge in; but if our hearts are so renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, as to be firmly and habitually opposed to our most beloved lusts, we have good evidence of a real conversion: for these inward capital enemies the Lord and all his upright followers attack most before all the rest. If we would give over that which is dearest to us, we must first know and believe that Christ is able and willing to help us, and has engaged his word that none shall seek his face in vain. Let us keep this thought ever in our minds; it will both stir up faith and encourage diligence in seeking after salvation.

Mistaken souls that dream of heaven,
And make their empty boast
Of inward joys and sins forgiven,
While they are slaves to lust.

Vain are our fancies, airy flights,
If faith be cold and dead;
None but a living power unites
To Christ, the living Head.

'Tis faith that changes all the heart;
'Tis faith that works by love;
That bids all sinful joys depart,
And lifts the thoughts above.

I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths; and she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them and not find them; then shall she say, I will go and return unto my first husband, for then was it better with me than now. Hosea ii. 6, 7.

AS it is only with thee, O my dear Saviour, that I can be happy, I would never leave thee any more. And that I may not slip from thee unawares, even under good pretences, I desire to have my way well hedged up, and be encompassed everywhere with thorns. Let me quickly discover and crucify everything which would give the least disturbance to the enjoyment of thy love, that I may always closely walk with thee alone, and never take a step out of thy way, for fear of running myself into the thorns, and bringing unnecessary suffering upon me; though I do not mean to avoid the cross of Christ in other respects, but would willingly submit to any sufferings, which are never without good fruit. Glory be to thee, O my blessed Saviour, that thou hast not given me up yet, and suffered me to run into destruction in my own ways. O be pleased to restrain me evermore; and whenever I am in danger of sliding to the broad way, let me find no rest till I am brought back, though it be through the briars of affliction.

I know thy judgments, Lord, are right,
Though they may seem severe;
The sharpest sufferings I endure
Flow from thy faithful care.



And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. Gen. xxvii. 24.

THERE are certainly some circumstances in this affair which may help a little to excuse Jacob and his mother, but cannot justify them. The case may be thus stated: It cannot be denied, on the one hand, but that both Jacob and his mother were justly to be praised for having a due esteem of the father's solemn blessing, and for their endeavouring to attain it; since this could proceed from no other motive than a full persuasion of the truth of God's promises and covenant with Abraham. And thus, from the consideration of the goodness of the end, and from Jacob's title to the blessing as accompanying the birthright, as also from the fore-appointment of God, together with Isaac's approbation of the thing when done, may be drawn some arguments to lessen their crime. But, on the other hand, it must be confessed, that the means used to attain their ends were highly criminal. Rebecca was wrong in her advice to her son, and he was wrong in following it; for though God, before he was born, designed him to inherit the blessing, yet he ought to have waited until the Divine Wisdom opened the way, and not have anticipated God, and procured the blessing by an irregular act of his own. Besides, both of them, by this act, presumed to limit the power of God, by thinking that fraud was needful to accomplish God's purpose.

Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. iii. 13. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.* James i. 14.

DOTH sin present itself? turn away from it with loathing and prayer. Give it not a look, lest it ensnare thee. If thou committest sin, and diest without repentance, thy soul is lost, and thy redemption ceaseth for ever; or if thou committest sin and dost repent, yet expect hidings of God's face, and breaking of bones, as David felt to his cost. Oh! what bitter pangs, what painful throes, what shadows of death, what terrors of hell may seize upon thee, before thou canst make thy peace, or settle thine assurance! Wilt thou give way to sin because it is delightful, or because it is pardonable? Who loves poison because it is sweet? or who drinks poison because he may have an antidote, seeing it will work to his trouble, if it work not out his life? I have a precious soul, shall I lose it for a lust? I have a gracious God, shall I venture him for a sin? No, Lord, give me grace to resist sin, give me victory over it. Let me always reject that for the indulgence of which I am sure to lose my peace, and endanger the loss of my immortal soul.

A tender conscience give me, Lord,
And put thy fear within,
That I may tremble at thy word,
And 'scape the snares of sin.

All mine iniquities blot out,
Thy face hide from my sin.
Create a clean heart, Lord, renew
A right sp'rit me within.

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life. 1 John v. 6, 10–12.

JESUS came with water and blood; not with water alone, to sanctify us, but also with his blood, to make atonement for our sins. We should, therefore, first of all, penitently seek and obtain remission of sins in his blood, then may we hope to obtain the water of life, the Holy Ghost, for our inward purification and sanctification. And his Holy Spirit will bear witness within us, that the gospel is truth, and that God will fulfil his word, by giving us everlasting life, as he hath promised. We have three witnesses of it in heaven, and three on earth. And if we believe in Christ, we have this true testimony in ourselves, and may therefore assuredly know that, having the Son of God, we have life, eternal life; for he is (according to verse 20) life eternal; and, consequently, being in him, we are already entered into everlasting life.

Let all our tongues be one
 To praise our God on high;
Who from his bosom sent his Son,
 To fetch us strangers nigh.

My Saviour's pierced side
 Poured out a double flood;
By water we are purified,
 And pardoned by the blood.

No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, &c. John iii. 13. Eph. iv. 9. Deut. xxx. 11–14. Matt. xi. 27.

NO mere man whatsoever has entered, or can enter, into the secrets of God's heart in heaven, relating to the great mysteries of salvation, so as immediately and perfectly to understand them, and make them known to others; but this privilege is peculiar to the Messiah, who is spoken of under the character of "The Son of Man," Ps. lxxx. 17, and Dan. vii. 13, and always had an existence in heaven as the Son of God, and who came from thence into an incarnate state, that he might reveal God's counsels to men. As many are perplexed about the divinity of Christ, the following may help them to conceive of that matter more properly:—As the divine and human natures were united in the person of Christ, some things are attributed to one nature which properly belong to the other. Thus, when it is said, 1 Cor. ii. 8, "The Lord of glory was crucified;" and Acts xx. 28, he is called "God, who purchased the Church with his own blood;" the meaning is not, that he, as the Lord of glory divine, was crucified, or, as God, shed his blood; as if the divine nature could be crucified and bleed; but that the person, who was the Lord of glory in one nature, was crucified in the other, &c. So when it is said, "The Son of man is in heaven," the meaning is not that he, as the Son of man, was there whilst he was on the earth, but that he, who was here in his human nature, was there in his divine.



I will perform my good word towards you: for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then ye shall pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me and find me. Jer. xxix. 10, 11, 13, 14.

THERE is a valley where neither sun, moon, nor stars are seen, and in which the Christian has often to travel; yet in the darkest place of it God is very nigh. This is the valley of extremity. It is into this valley that every soul must go before it can get a hold of Christ. It is here the sinner struggles with Jesus, and says, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." It is hard work travelling in this valley. Were it a light matter to rely on the faithfulness of God in times of distress, what need to give us so many and various promises? If our faith be right, we must also endure and wait his time with patience, which certainly is not an easy task; since the promise of our Lord not only tarries very often, but sometimes his providence goes contrary to his word, and makes his word seem to fall to the ground; yet then we must remember that these are the very ways and methods of God, which have ever been in the deep, and acted contrary to our expectation. This the corruption of our nature requires; and the wisdom of God ever chooses first to help us inwardly, by exercising faith and patience, and so prepares us for a right use of his outward favours. Thus we receive a double blessing at once from his hands.

Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. Hosea ii. 14. *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.* Song of Sol. vii. 11.

THE Lord forsaketh not his saints, though the great waves of affliction come upon them, and nigh overwhelm them, because they have forgotten their first love; and though the heavy tide of temptation be running strong against them, and they with their little bark of faith be unable to stem it, though they have given their hearts to that in which the Lord delighteth not, though they have backslidden often and far, yet the Lord "will allure them, and bring them into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto them." O Lord, this world is nothing to me but a wilderness, a place of tribulation, where, being tossed to and fro, I enjoy no rest; but when I lift up my heart and look for peace in thee, I am supported and comforted. Grant that I may thus be strengthened for the time to come, whenever I am at a loss what course to take. Let me always firmly believe thee to be a present help in trouble, who art willing and able to bear me up under all outward distresses, till I shall safely arrive at the rest of the people of God.

Lord! what wretched land is this, that yields us no supply,
No cheering fruits, no wholesome trees, nor streams of living joy?
But prickling thorns through all the ground and mortal poisons grow,
And all the rivers that are found, with dang'rous waters flow.

When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c. Luke xi. 2. *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss.* Jas. iv. 3.

MANY say the Lord's prayer who do not pray it. They do not care that God should say Amen, though they themselves will say so. They say, "Our Father;" but if he be their Father, where is his honour? They say, "which art in heaven;" but did they believe it, how durst they sin as they do upon earth? They say, "Hallowed be thy name;" yet take God's name in vain. They say, "Thy kingdom come;" yet oppose the coming of his kingdom. They say, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;" yet will not stand to their words, for this is the will of God, their sanctification; but they want none of that. They say, "Give us this day our daily bread;" yet mind not the feeding of their souls with "the bread (Christ Jesus) which came down from heaven." They say, "Forgive us, as we forgive others;" but alas! if God should take them at their word, how undone were they, whose hearts burn with malice and revenge. They say, "Lead us not into temptation;" yet run into it. They say, "Deliver us from evil;" and yet deliver themselves *to* evil, and give themselves "to fulfil the lusts of the flesh," &c. Yea, those generally sin most against this prayer who stickle most for the saying of it. Reader, how often hast thou been guilty of such vain petitions and repetitions? Wonder not, if thou prayest in such a manner as this, that thou receivest nothing. Labour to get a deep sense of God's *majesty* and mercy, that thy prayers may be fervent *and earnest*, and God will bless thee.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8. *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification; that, as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. *He has finished the transgression, he has made reconciliation for iniquity, he has brought in everlasting righteousness.* Dan. ix. 24. Isa. xlv. 24.

WHEREIN have we what we should glory in before the Lord? Have we obeyed the law? Have we satisfied, or can we satisfy, the divine justice? Where is the righteousness which we have of ourselves to give to God? Let us look back upon our past lives—is it there? Let us look into our own hearts—is it there? Alas! In ourselves we find nothing but misery; but in Christ we find all that is good; nay, he is himself our All. He works and gives what is necessary to salvation, therefore we cannot, and need not, bring anything to him of our own; but since he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and our all, we may, and must, rely only on his name, and draw everything from him by the continual prayer of faith. And when by living faith in Christ he becomes our all, the law, sin, Satan, and even our own judgments have lost their power and right of condemnation over us.

Jehovah speaks, let Israel hear;
Let all the earth rejoice and fear,
While God's eternal Son proclaims
His sov'reign honours and his names.

I am the Last, and I the First,
The Saviour-God, and God the just;
There's none beside pretends to show
Such justice and salvation too.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John iv. 11. *I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you.* Matt. v. 44.

HYPOCRITES may counterfeit the children of God in many things, but they cannot love their enemies from their hearts; and yet by this we must try and know ourselves, whether we are really children of God or not. The worldly very easily, but very falsely, suppose themselves to be God's children; but sincere Christians find it often very hard to believe it without a divine sense and assurance of it; it costs them many a sore conflict; for if Satan disputeth the Sonship of Christ, much less will he spare any of us. But since a true love to the children of God, and to our enemies, is a sure evidence of our state of grace, we have our title clear to it, though we should walk in darkness, and be destitute of all pleasant sensations. Give us, then, O thou Father of our spirits, the heart filled with love, that is able not only to love those that are of the same mind with ourselves, but also to love those that are opposed to us, and even to love those sincerely that do us wrong. Give the meek, the lowly, and the loving heart which Jesus had.

Now by the bowels of my God,
His sharp distress, his sore complaints,
By his last groans, his dying blood,
I charge my soul to love the saints.

And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing, and he said, Go again seven times. 1 Kings xviii. 43. James v. 17, 18. *Seven times a-day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.* Ps. cxix. 164. *Daniel kneeled upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God.* Dan. vi. 10.

SIX times Elijah's servant looked towards the sea before he could see anything; the seventh time he saw a cloud, but no bigger than his hand; yet that cloud, within a few hours, covered the heaven with darkness and the earth with rain. Just so may be the case with many a one when he is praying to his God, as Caleb's daughter did unto her father. Judges i. 15. Thou hast hitherto made me the owner of a dry, a barren heart; but give me now some springs of water, some feeling, at least, some sorrow for my sins. Well, though at six times bending of thy knees, God doth not grant it, and though at the seventh there appears but one small drop swimming in thine eyes, yet be not discomforted; that drop may prove a shower, the beginning of that thaw may at last dissolve thy whole heart to water; and as there is a full joy for the thorough conversion of a sinner, there may be a suitable measure of joy for one tear, nay, for one desire of a tear, of any one sinner that repenteth. Grant, O Lord, that I may be able to come unto thee at all times in holy confidence of prayer, and that my prayers may not only be unceasing, but that I may with expectation wait upon an answer.

Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land, but if you will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then shall it come to pass that those which ye let remain of them, shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, &c. Num. xxxiii. 52. 55. See this fulfilled, Judges i. 27. *Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean, &c., and the Canaanites would dwell in that land;* and in chap. ii. 14, *so that they* (the Israelites) *could not any longer stand before their enemies.*

THE very same is to be observed in the holy and spiritual battles of the Lord. He that fights only against outward sins, is but very little, if at all, acquainted with the dangerous enemies in his heart, or the deep corruption of original sin, and so the tempter may easily gain an advantage over him. Experienced Christians guard more against the inward assaults of wickedness; they are at peace with no sin, but keep up a constant war with all their most subtle and darling lusts. However, though the Canaanites, our inbred foes, must be conquered, they will dwell in the land, and cannot be wholly thrust out of the bosom, which makes the Christian warfare continue till death; yet give me grace, O Lord, never to spare my sinful lusts or tempers, but to look unto thee to destroy them without delay, as soon as they begin to move or stir, that I may not be destroyed by them.

O Prince of Peace, forgive my guilt,
Though more than I can tell;
And from the power of sin release,
And from the host of hell.

Furnish me, Lord, with heavenly arms,
From grace's magazine,
And I'll proclaim eternal war
With every darling sin.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Gen. i. 1, 2. *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.* Eph. ii. 10.

THEREFORE, before we can really grow in holiness, we must be born again. How is it possible for a man to grow in sanctification, without a real change being first wrought in his heart? It is the Spirit's way first to strip us of our own righteousness and strength, to show us our nakedness and nothingness, to fill us with godly sorrow for sin, and then lead us to Jesus for pardon, sanctification, and justification. Christ being the vine, we must first be planted in him, and draw nourishment and strength from him by faith. When it is fulfilled, "they shall feed and lie down" on his pasture, "and none shall make them afraid," Zeph. iii. 13, then we shall be able to bring forth good fruits, and obtain victories; for it is God himself that thus makes us perfect in every good work, and prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies.

I ask not honour, pomp or praise,
By worldly men esteemed;
I wish from sin's deceitful ways
To feel my soul redeemed.

I wish, as faithful Christians do,
Dear Lord, to live to thee,
And by my words and walk to show
That thou hast died for me.

In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.
Isa. xlv. 24. 2 Cor. ii. 14, and v. 19.

JUSTIFICATION through faith in Christ at first is a very dark doctrine, hard to be understood; but afterwards we find, by experience, that it would be impossible to be saved in any other way, and that nothing can be surer than this, though all mankind should turn away from it. And when we are made to see that our best performances are unclean in the sight of God, and could not be accepted without the covering of Christ's righteousness, then we are brought to submit entirely to Christ, and at last to look upon ourselves wholly justified through him, which alone produceth rest, strength, and a gentle spirit, the true image of Christ.

In vain do we hope to procure this rest by any reasonings or strong resolutions of our own; for if we are sometimes able to master our affections by our own strength, this is yet a building of our own, and keeps us from earnest wrestling in prayer. We have now a form of godliness without its power, and are still deceiving our own souls; for nothing can be pleasing in the sight of God, and profit us in the last day, but what he works himself. Away, therefore, with all these doings of our own. Let us acknowledge the weakness and nothingness of our strength, and apply in our poor, blind, naked, lost, and miserable condition, to the blood and righteousness of Christ; then we shall also find power and dominion over sin. Isa. xxxiii. 24.

David's Declaration.—*In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me.* Ps. lxxxvi. 7.
Divine Answer.—*Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.* Isa. lviii. 9. *The Lord is rich unto all who call upon him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*—(this, to the comfort of the weak, is several times repeated in Scripture) Joel ii. 32. Acts ii. 21. Rom. x. 12, 13, 19. *Therefore, when the righteous cry, the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.* Ps. xxxiv. 17, and cxlv. 18. James v. 16.

O GLORIOUS promise! how can God deny me anything now that I pray for? He has passed his word for it; his Son has purchased it; the Holy Spirit inspires the prayer; the word holds it forth; and the prayer of faith lays hold of it, and actually receives it. Prayer is the mouth of faith. If thou wilt have much, "open thy mouth wide, and it shall be filled." Who then should not be stirred up to pray much! O what foolishness in this, that we have nothing, but may obtain all from God, and yet are so loath to pray much and pray aright. O thou Hearer and Answerer of prayer, pour out upon my soul the spirit of prayer. Give me assured trust in thee, that thou wilt hear my prayer, and O let not my hope of an answer rest on anything but the all-prevailing merits of my Redeemer.

God knows the pains his servants feel,
He hears his children cry;
And, their best wishes to fulfil,
His grace is ever nigh.

Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. Matt. v. 34-37. See also Jas. v. 12.

SWEAR not by the creatures; that in effect is swearing by their Maker. Neither swear by thy Maker, unless called to it by authority for the putting an end to strife; swear not falsely, that is calling the God of truth to witness a lie; swear not needlessly or rashly, as Saul did. 1 Sam. xiv. 39. Such oaths or vows are ensnaring; better broken than kept, but best not made at all. Swear not idle, common oaths, such as, O Christ! O God! Faith and troth! By my soul! As I live! God bless me! If we must give account for every idle word, much more for every idle oath, and most of all for horrible cursing and blasphemy, that profanes God's name, and is the very language of hell. He that is guilty of perjury, not only is destroying his own soul, but is seeking to ruin his neighbour, by perverting justice, and robbing the innocent of his right. Yea, sometimes God takes a false-swearer and self-curser at his word, and strikes him dead on the spot. Lord, help the guilty to repent of their sin, and help all to watch and pray against it.

From false, and rash, and idle oaths,
Defend my tongue, O Lord;
Let salt of grace hang on my lips,
To season every word.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 19. *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.* Prov. xxiv. 29. See also Lev. xix. 18. *Recompense to no man evil for evil.* Rom. xii. 17.

JUDGE ye then, my brethren, would it be wise to snatch the rod out of the all-powerful hand of God, to take it into our own, even were it in our power to do it? We are taught by the holy prophet not to avenge ourselves, it being daring presumption to usurp God's province, and to step into his throne. He that chastiseth the nations, shall he not correct? Might may overcome right for a time, to try God's children; but whether that is done with a close hand, so as not to be discovered, or with a high hand, so as not to be controlled, God will, in his due time, show himself, and assert his right of vengeance against all that would take it from him. It is therefore our wisdom to call to mind our blessed Lord's silence when he suffered, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not," and to copy after it, committing ourselves to him that judgeth righteously.

Grace dwells with justice on the throne,
And men that love thy word
Have in thy sanctuary known
The counsels of the Lord.

When God, in his own sovereign ways,
Comes down to save the oppress'd,
The wrath of man shall work his praise,
And he'll restrain the rest.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. 2 Cor. v. 17.

LET no man be discouraged from coming to Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, that disposition of heart which he desires to have; we must first be in Christ before we are new creatures. This is a common fault among us; we would fain have something before we come. We think God's pardons are not free, but we must bring something in our hand; whereas the proclamation runs thus: "Buy without money;" that is, come without any excellency at all: because we are commanded to "come, and take the water of life freely." Therefore do not say, I have a fretful disposition, and a hard heart, and cannot mourn for sin as I should, therefore I will stay till that be done. It is all one as if you should say, I must go to the physician, but I will have my wounds well, and my disease healed first. The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away; that this very deadness of thy spirit may be removed; that thou mayest be enlightened, quickened, healed; that thou mayest hate sin, for he is thy physician; look not for sanctification, nor for genuine fruits of righteousness, till thy soul is united unto Christ by a living faith; for it is faith that purifies the heart, and works (*i.e.* produces good works) by love. Thou must first be in Christ, grafted into Christ by faith, before thou canst be a new creature.

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 1 Cor. vi. 12. See Chapters x. 23, and viii. 8.

MANY that are well affected to religion, and receive instructions of piety with pleasure and satisfaction, often wonder how it comes to pass that they make no greater progress in that religion which they so much admire. Now, the reason of it is, because religion lives only in their head, while something else has possession of their heart, and therefore they continue from year to year mere admirers and praisers of piety, without ever coming up to the reality and perfection of its precepts. If it be asked why religion does not get possession of their hearts? the reason is, not because they live in gross sins or debaucheries, for their regard to religion preserves them from such disorders, but because their hearts are constantly employed, perverted, and kept in a bad state by the wrong use of such things as are lawful to be used; for our souls may receive very great hurt, merely by the abuse of innocent and lawful things. What is more innocent than rest and retirement? and yet what more dangerous than sloth and idleness? What is more lawful than eating and drinking? and yet what more destructive of virtue than sensuality and indulgence? How lawful and praiseworthy is the care of a family! and yet what so prejudicial as an anxious worldly temper? Reader, follow the apostle, and beware of lawful things; keep thy heart free from the power of them.

M.

There are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

SOME believers are remarkable for the strength of their faith in trials, even unto death; others for liveliness and activity in duty; others for conduct, and prudence in temporals and spirituals, others for their zeal in defence of the truth; others for knowledge in the mysteries of truth; others for meekness and patience; others for outward usefulness; and some for an inward and spiritual life of communion with God; but all these are the various gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, dividing severally to every man as he will, and are given to profit withal. My fellow-Christians, let us hence learn a lesson of forbearance to our brethren. It is not right to judge of another by thine own pattern. Art thou a warm and active Christian? condemn not him whose endowments may be more placid and contemplative than thine. He who now creeps as a snail in humble silence, may, by one lift of divine power, be raised higher than thou art. The same may be said of other differences among the followers of Jesus: let us then no longer envy one another, or indulge a rash and censorious spirit; but rather covet earnestly the best gifts, and faithfully improve the talent committed to our trust, that each of us may receive that heart-reviving word, "Well done, good and faithful servant enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

There is a voice of sov'reign grace,
Sounds from the sacred word;
Oh! ye despairing sinners, come,
And trust upon the Lord.

Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above. James i. 17. See also Job i. 21.

READER, it is a point of the greatest importance for thee to know, that every evil thing is of thyself, and every good thing of God. Without faith we cannot be saved; but, saith St. Paul, Eph. ii. 8, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." We are called upon to repent; but in Acts v. 31, we read that Christ is exalted at the Father's right hand, to be a "Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel." We must be born again, but regeneration is wholly of God's will: "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 13. Saving knowledge is likewise the gift of God; "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xiii. 11. Effectual calling is also of God's grace. 2 Tim. i. 9. Justification is of God's grace; we are justified freely. Adoption also is an act of grace; he vouchsafes that high privilege, not in common to all, but only to so many as he pleaseth. Perseverance in duty is also God's gift; for "we are preserved by the power of God to salvation." Eternal life is also a gift; for "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." A right knowledge of these things, reader, will keep thee humble and dependent upon God; and not only dispose thee to give him the glory of his grace, but to seek to him diligently for it.

We would see Jesus. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. John xii. 21, and v. 39. *Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read.* Isa. xxxiv. 16. See also Chap. viii. 20.

IT is remarkable that the wise men travelling to find Christ, followed only the star, and as long as they had that in view, were assured that they were in the right way, and we may believe had great pleasure in their journey; but when they entered Jerusalem, whereas the star led them not thither, but to Bethlehem, and there would be instructed where Christ was born, they were not only ignorant of the place where, but had also lost the sight of the star which should guide them thither. Whereby we are taught this useful lesson, that when we are going to learn Christ, and seek Christ, who is above, to beware we lose not the star of God's word, which only is the mark that shows us where Christ is, and which way we may come to him. To which may be added, that if with David we make the word of God "a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths," we shall not be led aside by every false fire that presents itself to us; but by keeping close to the word of God, we shall be brought to the knowledge of Christ here, and to the full enjoyment of him hereafter. Reader, this little book is only designed to lead thee to "search the Scriptures," "which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ."

Eternal life God's word imparts,
Whereon each fainting spirit lives;
Here sweeter comforts cheer our hearts
Than all the round of nature gives.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers; and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Let not filthiness be once named among you, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient. Eph. iv. 29, 30, and v. 4. *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another.* Col. iii. 8, 9.

IDLE words are hurtful words; they grieve the Holy Spirit, destroy what power has been obtained by prayer, and cause nothing but levity and distraction of mind. Let this be a caution against talking too much; for if it does not tend to the glory of God, it is nothing but corrupt communication, the end of which is destruction and misery. May all Christians take heed to refrain their tongues, and never speak unadvisedly; but always consider first, whether their words can be profitable to others, and acceptable to God in heaven. O Lord, teach me, by thy wisdom, "to keep my mouth as it were with a bridle," and to weigh all my words like gold. Let my heart and lips be moved and governed by thy Spirit, that both my silence and talking may be according to thy will and direction! Grant that I may always chiefly converse with thee in prayer and thanksgiving for the good of my own soul and others; and whenever I am to open my lips in due time, let my words be so seasoned and blessed as to administer grace to the hearers.

So let our lips and lives express
The holy Gospel we profess!
So let our words and virtues shine,
To prove the doctrine all divine.

d he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and he top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Gen. xxviii. 12.

THIS ladder the Lord Jesus Christ applies to himself, John i. 51, and it may be considered as representing the Divine Providence which governs all things. The several steps of the ladder are the motions and actions of Providence which governs all up and down, show that they are the great ministers of Providence, never idle, but always employed in the preservation of the just; their ascending, means their going up to receive the divine orders and commands; and their descending, their coming down upon earth to put them in execution. So that, in this representation, God signified to Jacob, now full of care and uneasy apprehensions, that the man who was under the custody and protection of Divine Providence wanted not company in a wilderness; wanted not security in the midst of dangers; wanted not direction in the most difficult undertakings; since there were so many ministering spirits holding correspondence between earth and heaven, and daily and hourly "sent forth from God's presence to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation." Seeing, then, that these ministering spirits of God are still active in their work, shall I not enjoy the care and the direction of such holy beings? Shall I not give my poor soul into their hands? Alas, how it cli to its own foolish ways! May the God of g deliver it from these, for they are indeed folly.

Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Rev. xix. 6.

GOD is the Lord of hosts; he is the great commander of heaven and earth; he it is that directs all conflicts in war; no field is pitched, no battle fought, but by his special order and commission, and all for the accomplishment of his glory. But it befalleth us, as it doth them who stand in the same level wherein two great armies are ready to engage; they conceive them to be a disordered multitude; whom, notwithstanding, if beheld from a high hill, they would discern that they were artificially ranged, and every man serving under his own colours. Even so men, who behold the state of the world with the eyes of flesh and blood, dim by reason of the corruption of their judgments and weakness of their affections, think all things out of order; they "see servants riding on horses, and princes going on foot;" that the worse men are, the better they fare; and they fare the worse, the better they are: but if they would go into God's sanctuary, and judge of occurrences by heavenly principles, then they would confess that no army on earth can be better marshalled than the great army of all the creatures of heaven and earth, yea, and of hell too; and that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, all is well, and will end well, especially to God's people; and that the God of order will bring light out of darkness, and order out of the greatest confusion, could they but have patience, and let him alone with his own work.

Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord helped me. Ps. cxviii. 13. *Preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.* Jude 1.

JESUS was in the council, undertook our cause, struck hands in the covenant as our surety, wrought out a righteousness for us, suffered our curse on the tree to redeem us, ever lives, and ever loves, and ever pleads our cause, while he represents our persons before the everlastingly gracious and infinitely just and righteous Jehovah, his Father and our Father, now well pleased with us, because accepted and preserved in the Beloved. Are these things so? And has the Lord the Spirit, the glorifier of Jesus, enlightened our understandings to see these things, enabled us to believe, and assured our hearts of our own happy share and interest in them? O my soul, stop, reflect, dwell on such wonderful power, marvellous favour, distinguishing love, and appropriated mercy! Now let all mine enemies exert their utmost power, I will not be afraid. Afflictions, pains, temptations, may await me, waves and storms may go over my head, Satan may sift me as wheat, the waters of death may prove bitter to my taste, yet I will not be discouraged; he that died for me will take care of me; he that pardoned my aggravated offences will heal my infirmities; he that knew the power of temptation will support and deliver me out of all. This I believe; Lord, help my unbelief! The wisdom, the power, the love, the promise, the covenant, and the oath of Jehovah, stand all engaged for the preservation of a *poor,* unworthy believer in Jesus. Alleluia.

Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matt. xi. 29. *Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

SUCH as are haughty and self-conceited, rush against the mighty hand of God, and destroy themselves: but those that are humbled under it, will be protected by the same. Whatever knowledge or skill we may obtain in the schools of human learning, the Scripture does not yet allow us to be truly wise, but calls us blind and mere worldly students, till we learn to be poor in spirit, lowly in heart, and dead to the world. Prov. xi. 2; 1 Cor. i. and ii. Therefore, the more a man dies to this world, the more is he enlightened; and the more humiliating views he obtains of his worthlessness in the sight of Jehovah, the greater will be his capacity of grace, and the more abundant supplies of grace will be administered to his soul. What is more precious in the sight of God than the soul that is broken from its own conceit and vanities, and has enlisted itself under the banner of Jesus, a meek and lowly soldier of the Cross? As nothing, then, O my soul, bend thyself in the presence of the Lord. Lay that aside which is of this world, and putting on the garment of heavenly meekness, walk humbly with thy God.

Lord, if thou thy grace impart, poor in spirit, meek in heart,
I shall as my Master be, rooted in humility.
Simple, teachable, and mild, changed into a little child:
Pleased with all the Lord provides, weaned from all the world besides;
Father, fix my soul on thee, every evil let me flee;
Nothing want beneath, above; happy in thy precious love.

And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. Gen. xxxii. 1.

AS Jacob was favoured with a heavenly vision when he first departed from his father's house, so the Divine Being thought proper again to favour him with the same token of his protection on his return thither, in order to encourage him to meet with confidence those dangers he had to encounter. Hence we may observe, that when God designs his people for extraordinary trials, he prepares them by extraordinary comforts. We should think it had been more seasonable for these angels to have appeared to him just in the heat of his engagement, either with Laban before, or Esau after, than in this calm and quiet interval, when he saw not himself in any imminent peril. But God will have us, when we are in peace, to provide for trouble; and when trouble comes, draw comfort and encouragement from former experiences; knowing assuredly, that he who has delivered in six troubles will also deliver in seven; and in due time out of all. This may be a representation of God's people at death, who after a life of sore trial and heavy conflict with the triple-armed enemy of their souls, are triumphantly returning to Canaan, to their heavenly Father's house; and then the angels of God will meet them, to congratulate the happy finishing of their labours, and carry them to their everlasting rest; there to dwell with God and the Lamb, and in company with the whole multitude of redeemed saints, to sing the songs of praise in the New *Jerusalem.*

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt. xii. 37. *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.* James i. 26. *I will take heed that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.* Ps. xxxix. 1.

THE general turn of a man's discourse will clearly discover the bent of his mind; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Other outward marks may be imitated; but not to offend in tongue, to be free from detraction and boasting, to speak the truth in love, to "let no corrupt communication (nothing contrary to peace or holiness) proceed out of the mouth," this is the finger of God. Here the hypocrite and formalist always fail. Let us earnestly pray for grace to bridle the tongue. "O Lord, set a watch before my mouth; keep the door of my lips," that I may never bring a reproach upon my profession, by speaking proud, false, foolish, or censorious words; but, on the contrary, may I speak the words of wisdom, and out of a meek and a pure heart, adorn the doctrine which I profess, by a holy and quiet conversation. Especially, defend me in presence of them who fear not thy name, that I bring not a reproach thereon, by any foolish word that I may let slip out of my mouth.

The tongue, that most unruly power,
Requires a strong restraint;
We must be watchful every hour,
And pray, but never faint.

Loose them, and bring them unto me, and if any say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them. Matt. xxi. 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.* Judges xv. 4.

THUS the Spirit of the Lord makes us free from all spiritual bonds; for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. iii. 17. Though I was torn from Christ by the enemy, yet, as a robber, he gets no right to me. Christ does not give up for this reason his right which he has to me on so many accounts; and as soon as I am willing by his grace to give up myself to him, and desire to be delivered from the power of Satan, he vindicates and saves me as his property; I am his, Satan loses his hold, and nothing in the world can withhold me from him. All fetters must fall off. "The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands." Help me to resign myself wholly into thy hands, and may the Spirit of the Lord loose my bonds, the bonds of sin.

What though the hosts of death and hell
All armed against me stood?
Terrors no more shall shake my soul;
My refuge is my God.

Arise, O Lord, fulfil thy grace,
While I thy glory sing;
My God hath broke the serpent's teeth,
And death hath lost his sting.

Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezek. xviii. 31. See also 2 Cor. v. 17–21.

MANY are converted, but not entirely to Christ and from their own righteousness, so as to be truly sensible of their abominable wickedness, and earnestly to flee to Christ for reconciliation and righteousness; and, therefore, they never seek to Jesus to make the new heart and new spirit, but continue on in their mere outward moral state, year after year. But to be truly a member of the spiritual body of Christ Jesus, there must not only be an outward morality, there must also be the inward spirituality, the sanctification of the heart, the renewing of the whole inner man in that heavenly knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, which adorned the soul before the fall. O Lord, let me daily receive a word from thee, to nourish and strengthen my soul, so as to be renewed daily by it more and more.

O for a heart to love my God;
A heart from sin set free;
A heart that always feels the blood
So freely shed for me!

A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My dear Redeemer's throne;
Where only Christ is heard to speak;
Where Jesus reigns alone;

A lowly and believing heart,
Abhorring self and sin;
A constant heart, which nought can part
From Christ who dwells within.

Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. Luke x. 41. *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.* Prov. iv. 23. *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.* Matt. xv. 8.

AS the virtue of a strong spirituous liquor evaporates by degrees in a vial which is not closely stopped, in like manner the life and power of the Spirit insensibly vanish away, if the heart be not kept with all diligence. Of the former, remains only water; of the latter, nothing but the form of religion, or perhaps some false principles and errors crept in. Therefore many must be tried and sifted, that they may know, like Hezekiah, what is in their hearts (2 Chron. xxxii. 31); consequently, what more needful than to take heed to our own spirits, and to keep close to the written word; for as the latter times draw nearer, the more plausible will errors and seducements appear, both on your right hand and on your left. Beware of being drawn off from the truth, either by the worldly prudence of half-hearted professors, or by pretences to merit in the self-righteous Pharisee.

O Lord, permit me not to be
A stranger to myself and thee;
Amidst a thousand thoughts I rove,
Forgetful of my highest love.

Call me away from flesh and sense,
One sov'reign word can draw me thence,
I would obey the voice divine,
And all inferior things resign.

Be earth, with all her scenes, withdrawn;
Let noise and vanity be gone;
In secret silence of the mind
My heaven, and there my God, I find.

My soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land. Ps. cxliii. 6. *Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Rev. xxii. 17. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* John vii. 37, 38.

WHEN thou art dry and barren, examine thyself closely what may be the cause; ask pardon for all known offences, and take care to amend them. And though thou shouldst not find anything particular, yet humble thyself deeply before the Lord; but, at the same time, remember that thou art accepted, beloved, justified, and blessed in Christ; and in this disposition quietly wait the returns of some new drops of living water and grace; but be also sure afterwards to cherish and make a right use of them. Thus thou shalt be under the immediate care of the mighty God of Jacob. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Isa. lviii. 11.

For thee I thirst, O Lord, I mourn!
When will thy smiling face return?
Shall all my joy on earth remove,
And God for ever hide his love?

ANSWER.

Ho! ye that pant for living streams,
And pine away and die,
Here you may quench your raging thirst
With springs that never dry.

My soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation; he only is my defence, I shall not be greatly moved. Therefore, *trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him. God is a refuge for us.* Ps. lxii. 1, 2, 8.

THE more patient, believing, and singled-eyed we are, the sooner we shall see the salvation and victory of the Lord. Double-minded souls have the greatest struggle; and the slothful must tarry the longer. Sometimes, it is true, though we are faithful, yet we must cry out, "O Lord, how long?" Ps. vi. 3. But nevertheless, he always hears and delivers us, though we do not see and feel it directly, but seem to suffer continually. In heaven we shall certainly see it, and reap the blessed fruits of all our afflictions and prayers. While we are upon this earth, the face of the Lord may often be obscured and hid from us, yet at length we shall "see the glory of the Lord in the cloud," and deliverance shall come out of the troubles that seemed to overwhelm us. Thus it is that the Lord works with his people, to keep them always in remembrance of himself. Shall we not wait then for him, even though he takes so long? Yes, my soul, wait thou upon the Lord, for he is a refuge for thee.

Almighty God of truth and love,
In me thy power exert!
The mountain from my soul remove,
The hardness of my heart.

From thee, that I no more depart,
No more thy goodness grieve,
The filial awe, the fleshy heart,
The tender conscience give!

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Ps. xxxvii. 25.

SWEET declaration! encouraging experience! The Lord indeed careth for the righteous; for those who, having seen the want of mercy, rely for it upon the promise of God, that there is forgiveness with him through the meritorious life and death of Jesus Christ. He hath promised that he will never leave nor forsake them; that he will withhold from them no manner of thing that is good. He careth also for their seed; so that they shall not beg their bread. He frequently provides for them when their parents are no more, in such unexpected ways, that many who see it are constrained to acknowledge, "This is the Lord's doing." And sometimes, while they are living, he brings bread to their mouths, and also furnishes them with opportunities to hear of and seek for the bread which came down from heaven, and which endureth unto everlasting life; thus snatching them from the jaws of ignorance and destruction. O Lord, if mine ears have heard,—if mine eyes have seen, and, more especially, if I partake of such blessings, thankfully may I own that thou art a God keeping covenant and mercy; and make this proof of thy thankfulness a ground of reliance upon thee for all needful promised blessings!—Help me to cast all my cares on thee, and endeavour by prayer, instruction, and example, that thy goodness may be sanctified to my seed.

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. Col. i. 11. *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.* Acts v. 41. *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.* Eph. iii. 16. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.* Gal. v. 22

O MY soul, what encouraging words are these! How full of meaning! The Lord our righteousness is the Lord our strength. He is near at hand, believer, to strengthen thee according to thy need; not in one or two respects, but with all might, with a supply suited to every various occasion, and that to the utmost, answerable to what may be expected from the exertion of "his own glorious power." Happy state of the believer in Jesus; though feeble in himself, surrounded with enemies, and exercised with a continual warfare, he shall not be overpowered; for the promise and the arm of God are on his side. The Lord, who can do what he pleaseth, is in alliance, yea, in covenant with a believer; and, therefore, he shall be made more than a conqueror through Christ who has loved him.

Let me but hear my Saviour say,
"Strength shall be equal to thy day;"
Then I rejoice in deep distress,
Leaning on all-sufficient grace.

I glory in infirmity,
That Christ's own power may rest on me;
When I am weak, then am I strong,
Grace is my shield, and Christ my song.

Christian's Declaration.—*My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Song of Sol. ii. 16.

Divine Answer.—*I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness; and thou shalt know the Lord.* Hos. ii. 19, 20.

BY faith in the blood of Christ we are accepted, and closely united to him as our bridegroom. By faith we daily eat his flesh, drink his blood, and are sprinkled all over: and need there is of a daily sprinkling, that our persons and services may be accepted, since the best of our works, our prayers and praises, our duties and graces, are all unclean, till washed in the blood of Jesus. This appears from Heb. ix. 19-21, where it is said, that "all the vessels of the ministry, and even the book, were sprinkled." By faith let us cling to this blood of sprinkling, which emanates from the cross, and let us abide in Jesus, without whom we can bring forth no fruit; "for as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." John xv. 4.

Hark! the Redeemer from on high,
Sweetly invites his fav'rites nigh;
From caves of darkness and of doubt,
He gently speaks, and calls us out.
"My sister and my spouse," he cries,
"Bound to my heart by various ties;
Thy powerful love my heart detains
In strong delight, and pleasing chains."
Dear Lord, our thankful heart receives
The hope thy invitation gives;
To thee our joyful lips shall raise
The voice of prayer, the voice of praise.

David's Prayer.—*When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* Ps. xxvii. 8. *I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.* Ps. cxix. 94. Divine Answer.—*They who seek me early shall find me.* Prov. viii. 17. *The humble shall see this, and be glad; and your hearts shall live that seek God.* Ps. lxix. 32. *Seek, and ye shall find.* Matt. vii. 7. *For I am the life.* John xiv. 6. *For whoso findeth me, findeth life.* Prov. viii. 35.

SUCH arguments and entreaties we may use with God, to strengthen us in faith; he does not want them, but we do; and he is well pleased when we take him at his word. For if we did not draw near to God in prayer till our hearts are quickened, perhaps we might never come. Therefore we must not indulge ourselves in such a state of dulness, but rather put a force upon ourselves, and pray against our natural inclination. Being faithful and instant in this, we shall certainly have our affections warmed, and great power and blessings given from above, that our hearts may live. O Lord, I plead thy precious promises; and thou canst not deny thy word. Thou hast laid thyself under obligation to help a feeble praying soul. Then let thy Holy Spirit abide with me, to quicken my soul when fainting, and to rule my heart in all things, that no sin may have dominion over me.

Lord, I address thy heavenly throne.
Call me a child of thine.
Send down the Spirit of thy Son
To form my heart divine.
There shed thy choicest love abroad,
And make my comforts strong;
Then shall I say, My Father God,
With an unwav'ring tongue.

David's Prayer.—*O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed.* Ps. xxv. 2. *In thee, O Lord, do I hope; thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.* Ps. xxxviii. 15. *Let none that wait on thee be ashamed.* Ps. xxv. 3.

Divine Answer. — *Hope maketh not ashamed.* Rom. v. 5. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which abideth for ever.* Ps. cxxv. 1. Pray for help; *and though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come; it will not tarry.* Hab. ii. 3. *Then thou shalt know, &c.* Isa. xlix. 23.

DOES God delay his promises and the enemy raise a suspicion against his faithfulness? remember it is said, "Pray and wait." Wait for the coming of God's own good time. His time will come, and "though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come." Thou art still alive, and shalt yet be a witness to God's faithfulness. If he were not faithful and true, he could not be God. His faithfulness is eternal, and as sure and as great as himself, above all our thoughts. Thou shalt at last the more gloriously experience it, and not be ashamed. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not fail, because "He keepeth truth for ever." Ps. cxlvi. 6. Hath he promised, and shall he not perform? hath he said, and will he not do? Yea, verily, his words are truth to the end of the world.

Happy the man whose hopes rely
On Israel's God: he made the sky,
And earth, and seas, with all their train;
And none shall find his promise vain.

His truth for ever stands secure;
He saves th' oppressed, he feeds the poor;
He sends the lab'ring conscience peace,
And grants the pris'ner sweet release.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. John iii. 14. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* John xii. 32.

THIS he spoke of his death. And it is the remembrance of his cruel death, of what he suffered, said, and finished, when he hung naked and wounded upon the cross, that relieves an afflicted conscience, and effectually captivates the sinner's heart to himself. The sharpest convictions, if not relieved by this sight, will never teach the heart to love. The strongest resolutions, unless made with this bleeding object in view, will melt away like snow: but a crucified Saviour is a powerful loadstone indeed; multitudes have been drawn by it from sin to holiness, from Satan to God, from earth to heaven. Come then, my soul, contemplate thy Redeemer in all the stages of his humiliation work. Travel with him from his birth to his cross, from his cross to his grave, and from the grave behold him rising, the first fruits of them that sleep. Go, my soul, and spend an hour with him in Gethsemane; see his bloody sweat, hear his groans, and think what all this was for. It was for thy sins; that he might redeem thee to God; that he might bring back to thy Father who is in heaven a pure and a redeemed spirit. Then love him.

Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. 1 Cor. xiii. 4–8.

O MY dear heavenly Father, I desire to love thee and my neighbour with a pure heart fervently, and beg thou wouldst let me know and enjoy thy love in Christ, as the only means of producing this love in me. For how can my heart be cold when resting at the cross of Christ, and feeling the virtue of his blood? Or how can it be hard, when lying in thy bosom, richly tasting of thy grace, and sweetly experiencing thine everlasting love to me, a vile miserable sinner? Oh, may a sense of thy love melt my hard heart into love, and change it thoroughly; and change my longing desires from those sinful things of time that gender strife.

Had I the tongues of Greeks and Jews,
And nobler speech than angels use,
If love be absent, I am found,
Like tinkling brass, an empty sound.

Were I inspired to preach, and tell
All that is done in heaven and hell;
Or could my faith the world remove,
Still I am nothing without love.

Should I distribute all my store
To feed the bowels of the poor;
Or give my body to the flame,
To gain a martyr's glorious name,—

If love to God and love to men
Be absent, all my hopes are vain;
Nor tongues, nor gifts, nor fiery zeal,
The work of love can e'er fulfil.

David's Prayer.—*Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.* Ps. xxv. 1.

Divine Answer.—*Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart; thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* Ps. x. 17.

FAITH only desires Christ, and does neither delight in the gain, nor grieve much at the loss, of temporal things; but faith, through an earnest desire for Christ and his word, rises above all creatures, and overcomes all worldly pleasures and fears. And this being the work of God, will certainly be accomplished; nay, is looked upon as really accomplished already in our desires and endeavours after it; in the same manner as evil desires are reckoned for deeds in the sight of God, though they never proceed to outward acts. Let the inward desires of my heart be, that God, even the God of Israel, may sanctify me by the Holy Spirit, and raise my faith to embrace Christ as far more precious than all this world possesses. May I, in my dear Saviour, see a Jordan in which I may wash and be clean; and may my heart not aim after the streams of earth, which have no healing power, but my health being in Christ, may he be all I seek after; as whatever I may do, may I always seek the Lord.

I cannot bear thine absence, Lord;
My life expires, if thou depart;
Be thou, my heart, still near my God,
And thou, my God, be near my heart.

I was not born for earth and sin,
Nor can I live on things so vile;
Yet will I stay my Father's time,
And hope and wait for heaven a while.

Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee; thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul, and redeemed my life. Lam. iii. 57, 58. *Fear not, for I am with thee.* Isa. xliii. 5. *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Rev. i. 18.

CHRIST has overcome death, led captivity captive, and "by one offering, perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. Whoever leaves this world believing in him, being perfected already, has nothing to fear after death. O my heavenly Father, dispose me to seek diligently after holiness; and though the work of sanctification will be imperfect in this life, which should humble me much, yet let it cause no fear of death, nor disturb my confidence in thee, since my salvation and my confidence do not depend on a perfect holiness here, but on my being in Christ and adopted through him; which adoption the weakest child hath, as well as the strongest, though both are not equally sensible of it. For every true believer, whether weak or strong, hath eternal life, and shall not fall into condemnation. If, therefore, I am a child of God, though a weak one, I am still an heir, and shall find life and deliverance in death.

I am Alpha, says the Saviour,
I Omega likewise am;
I was dead and live for ever,
God Almighty and the Lamb.
In the Lord is our perfection,
And in him our boast we'll make;
We shall share his resurrection,
If we of his death partake.

What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? and a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces? Jer. xxiii. 28, 29.

IS there not great condescension in the everlasting Father of all imparting to the sinful sons of men a knowledge of himself, the infinite God, in language so plain and simple, that our finite understandings can comprehend it? Was there ever humility mingled with love like this? Yes, I hear you say, the infinite God becoming man was greater. It was; but this plain and simple and pure word of God contains the knowledge and purport of this still more condescending event; and what were such an event without our knowledge of it? To value this precious gift of God's word aright, let us inquire of what use it is to us. Hear God's own declaration, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?" it is as a hammer to break down our hard and sinful hearts, and as a fire to melt and purify them. And what more convenient for our wants? Our hearts are hard, deceitful, and filled with every wicked thing. They need to be broken, to be bended from their pride; they need to be melted to love and to godly sorrow; they need to be cleansed of their pollutions, and God's word is powerful to these. May the Spirit of the Lord help me to study and apply that sacred Word, and may my soul by it be, every day, made wiser unto salvation.

Thy word, almighty Lord,
Where'er it enters in,
Is sharper than a two-edged sword
To slay the man of sin.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos iii. 3. *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.* 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17.

READER, I suppose thee a religious person, one that has been converted by the power of grace, one that is desirous to glorify God in life and conversation, one that has an interest in Jesus, and wants to have it made more manifest to thine own self every day, one that considers this life as a passage to a better, and would be glad of a spiritual companion to go along with thee, for "two are better than one." Give not the right hand of fellowship to any before thou hast tried him, for two cannot walk comfortably together except they are agreed. Bring him to the law of God, the eternal, moral law of God, contained in the ten commandments, and ask him, Does he look upon that law of God as the rule of his life? If he denies it, avoid him. If he says he is not under the commanding power of it, turn away from him. But if he says that he sincerely takes it as God's revealed will to him, owning the authority thereof over his conscience and conversation, "Thus saith the Lord," breathing after universal obedience, repenting and mourning where he falls short, and fleeing by faith to Christ for all peace and pardon, take such a one for a friend and companion. And may the Lord ever enable me to receive into my affections only those who are his dear children in Christ.

y soul fainteth for thy salvation. My soul is continually in my hand. Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. Ps. cxix. 81, 109, 116, 132.

O LORD, I love thy name; it is dear unto my heart. And, since thou art called merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and even the Lord our righteousness, I therefore depend upon nothing of my own, but throw myself entirely upon thy free grace and righteousness, which alone keeps me in peace. Without thee I am ignorant and weak; and Satan being as wicked as he is cunning, what would become of me, if I were not kept and preserved by thee? Thy name is a strong tower, the righteous enter there and are safe; there let me abide also continually, so shall I be safe from every adversary. The power of Satan shall not prevail against me, neither shall the enticements of the body overwhelm the grace of the soul, but the Lord shall be my shield and my exceeding great reward. He is the Rock of Ages that stands unmoved, and on which all may find security.

The arms of everlasting love,
Beneath my soul he placed;
And on the Rock of Ages set
My slippery footsteps fast.

The city of my bless abode
Is walled around with grace;
Salvation for a bulwark stands,
To shield the sacred place.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory. Ps. cxv. 1. *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.* Matt. vi. 13.

HOW little reason have we to glory in anything of our own, since nothing but sin is ours, which even defiles that which is of God!

O Lord, grant that I may always give thee the praise of thy own, and may learn to delight and glory in thee, having no other aim but to walk before thee in godly simplicity and sincerity. For "he that walketh uprightly walketh surely." Prov. x. 9. All disquiet of mind ariseth from our own lusts and unmortified tempers, which make the bosom like a troubled sea; and no settled calm shall we find till we have a single eye to God's glory, and can count ourselves worthy of no good. Then we may draw comfort out of trouble, and learn to praise the Lord, both for what he giveth and for what he taketh away; being sure that all things are working for our good, and tending to God's glory, which he knows best how to promote; and that nothing but sin can make us unhappy and miserable.

Great God, how infinite art thou!
What worthless worms are we!
Let the whole race of creatures bow,
And pay their praise to thee.,

Our lives through various scenes are drawn
And vexed with trifling cares,
While thine eternal thought moves on
Thine undisturbed affairs.

...e shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
Rom. viii. 33, 34.

THERE is a story, how the devil appeared to a dying man, and showed him a parchment roll, which was very long, whereon were written, on both sides, the sins of the poor sick man, which were many in number; and there were also written the idle words he had spoken in his life, together with the false words, the unchaste words, and the angry words; afterwards came his vain and ungodly words; and, lastly, his actions, digested according to the commandments. Whereupon Satan said, See here, behold thy virtues! see here, what thy examination must be!—Whereupon the poor sinner answered, It is true, but thou hast not set down all; for thou shouldst have added, and set down here below, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin;" and this also should not have been forgotten, that "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." Whereupon the devil vanished. Thus, if the devil should muster up our sins, and set them in order before us, let but Christ be named in a faithful way and he will give back, and fly away with all speed.

My sins are great I do confess,
And of a scarlet dye;
But Jesu's blood can wash me clean,
As God does testify.

But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image. 2 Cor. iii. 18. *For he has left us an example that we should follow his steps.* 1 Pet. ii. 21.

HOW pure and how holy is that example which our blessed Jesus led, when, a man like unto us, he dwelt on our earth, enduring the same sorrows and temptations which we suffer! yet he overcame them all, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. If, before we say or do anything, we would but always consider whether it would be agreeable to the pattern of Christ, a multitude of sins would be avoided. O Lord, however guilty and unworthy I am, yet, when I can humble myself before thee as the vilest of sinners, and look up unto thee for help, depending only upon thy free grace, I entreat thee to hear me. Grant, therefore, O my God, that this being my daily exercise before thee may be my constant exercise, and that by this means, I may be strengthened cheerfully to follow thy pattern, and be daily more changed into the glorious image of thy love, patience, and holiness, and thus be ripening for eternal life.

My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in thy word;
But in thy life the law appears,
Drawn out in living characters.

Such was thy truth, and such thy zeal,
Such deference to thy Father's will,
Such love, and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe and make them mine.

Be thou my pattern, make me bear
More of thy gracious image here;
Then God the Judge shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb.

He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Matt. v. 4

MANY serious people are very ready to give to the pious poor, but are afraid of relie a common beggar; and it must be owned, as riches are a talent from God, they who them must be discreet in the distribution of t The religious poor have the best claim, but o ought not to be entirely overlooked; as is from the conduct of God himself, for "he ma the sun to rise on the evil and on the good." may be said they will make an ill use of bounty; but what then? Is not this the very of divine goodness? Is not this the very good that is recommended to us in Scripture, by imitating of which we may show ourselves t "the children of our Father which is in heaven, sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"? I beg of God to deal with me, not accordin my merit, but according to his own great g ness; and shall I be so absurd as to withhold charity from a poor fellow-creature, because he perhaps not deserve it? Shall I use a measure wards him, which I pray God never to use tow me? Lazarus was a common beggar; and ye was the care of angels, and carried into Abrah bosom. "I was a stranger, and ye took me in," s our blessed Saviour; but who can perform this d that will not relieve persons that are unknow them? "As we have therefore opportunity, le do good unto all men, especially unto them who *of the household of faith.*"

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Ps. xxiii. 4. See also Exod. xiv. of the deliverance of the Israelites, and the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

TO rejoice in the light of God's countenance is certainly most pleasant, but not always so profitable to every one as sometimes to walk in the dark, nay, in the valley of the shadow of death. Some are more humble and cautious while walking in the dark than in the light; and glimpses of grace are then exceedingly precious; but such should consider for their humiliation, that darkness and deadness are commonly the effects of a wrong spirit and a careless walk. O Lord, grant that when I am deprived of sensible comforts, I may yet be enabled to rely upon thy bare word, and in death may be refreshed by the light of thy countenance. Amen. Thou hast declared "that the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32.

Death cannot make our souls afraid,
If God be with us there;
We may walk through our darkest shade,
And never yield to fear.

May I but climb to Pisgah's top,
And view the promised land,
My flesh itself shall long to drop,
And pray for the command.

Clasp'd in my heavenly Father's arms,
I shall forget my breath,
And lose my life among the charms
Of so divine a death.

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father; and attend to know understanding. Prov. iv. 1. *We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.* John iii. 11. *Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God.* 1 John iv. 1.

READER, let the following monitions, the result of long experience and observation, be acceptable unto thee. They are designed for thy spiritual good, will warn thee against errors, and, if complied with, will give thee a true relish of gospel peace and redeeming love. Let "the life thou now livest in the flesh be by faith in the Son of God." Labour after a constant soul-reviving fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. Watch over thy passions, conduct, and conversation, so as that the Spirit of the Lord be not grieved, nor his comfortable influences withdrawn from thy soul. Be ready to every good work as thou hast ability and opportunity: and take special care thy good be not evil spoken of through the manner of performing. Let no external services whatever, either respect thyself or others, make thee neglect a constant watchfulness over the inward motions of thine heart. Let the written word of God be the invariable rule, both in principle and practice. Be very earnest after meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, inward holiness, and all other graces of the Spirit; these carry their own evidence that they are wrought of God, and in their blessed effects remain with thee for ever. "My son, if thine heart be wise, and experienced in these things, my heart shall rejoice, even mine."

David's Prayer.—*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* Ps. cxix. 18. See also Ps. xiii. 3, and xxxii. 9.

Divine Answer.—*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.* John xii. 46. Ps. cxlvi. 8.

MANY imagine their eyes are opened, and that they have clear notions of religion in their heads; but they see just like Eve after eating the forbidden fruit; their hearts being corrupted, are destitute of Christian simplicity and godly sincerity; for he that does not understand the word of God by the light of the Holy Spirit, through prayer and faith, but only by his natural reason, is certainly blind still (Rev. iii. 17); and one devilish and plausible temptation to error and sin is enough to break the strongest chain of human reasoning; for it is only "faith that gets the victory." 1 John v. 4. O my soul! get faith; seek it earnestly from God; thou canst not buy it; thou canst not take it up of thyself; thou must get it. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. ii. 8. Nor canst thou get it until thou ask for it. Ask it then of God, and seek for it diligently.

The souls enlightened from above,
With joy receive the word:
They see what wisdom, power, and love
Shine in their dying Lord.

The vital savour of his name
Restores their fainting breath;
But unbelief perverts the same
To guilt, despair, and death.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. John xv. 4, 5. See also 1 John ii. 6.

I CAN no more do without thee, O my dear Saviour, than the branch can without the vine. Keep me therefore always in thee, else I shall have recourse to my old fancied stock of grace, though I have been a thousand times convinced of my insufficiency. May I never be left in the least thing to my own strength, but be directed, assisted, and blessed by thee in all my doings; for as far as I trust to myself, I am distrustful of thee, and consequently weak; and, on the other hand, the more I distrust myself, the more I trust on thee, and shall be strengthened and blessed. Be thou my refuge and my never-failing friend.

Son of God, thy blessing grant;
Still supply my every want;
Tree of Life, thine influence shed;
With thy sap my spirit feed.

Tend'rest branch, alas! am I;
Wither without thee, and die;
Weak as helpless infancy;
O confirm my soul in thee!

Unsustain'd by thee, I fall;
Send the strength for which I call;
Weaker than a bruised reed,
Help I every moment need.

Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God. Ps. l. 14, 15, 23. See also Isa. xxv. 9.

NOTHING moves God more to hear us than glorifying him by faith with thanksgiving, and keeping up a child-like confidence in him, as our reconciled Father in Christ; and nothing quickeneth faith more than sure promises of answering our prayers. Thus God will certainly hear and deliver us, since all his ways are only designed to strengthen us in faith, and to save our souls. What need we then to be afraid in times of trouble? ought we not rather to draw near to God in prayer and thanksgiving, and glorify him even beforehand, confidently believing, that we shall certainly meet with new deliverances and quickenings of faith? Yes, my soul, wait thou upon the Lord; he shall save thee, and thou shalt be glad and rejoice in his salvation; for in his favour is light, and with him is power to order thy conversation aright.

To what a stubborn frame
Has sin reduced our mind!
What strange ungrateful wretches we!
And God as strangely kind!

Turn, turn us, mighty God,
And mould our souls afresh;
Break, sov'reign grace, these hearts of stone,
And give us hearts of flesh.

Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Isa. iii. 10. *Therefore, mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.* Ps. xxxvii. 37.

MANY are for having that first, which is not to be expected till the end. They would be glad of the triumph, but will not fight; the waiting for the Lord seems to them too long:—but for the most glorious promises we must often wait the longest. Jacob was obliged to wait longer than Esau, though he had greater promises than he: and how long was it before the promise of Christ, the greatest of all, was accomplished! It ought, therefore, well to be observed, that it is said at last "It shall be well with the righteous, and the end of the upright is peace." When his faith, love, and patience are tried enough in the furnace of afflictions, then the acceptable year shall come, and the blessed days of joy will appear. May I live the life and die the death of the righteous, and may my latter end be like his, full of peace, and joy, and rejoicing.

As sparks break out of burning coals,
And still are upward borne,
So grief is rooted in our souls,
And man grows up to mourn.
Yet with my God I leave my cause,
And trust his promised grace;
He rules me by his well-known laws
Of love and righteousness.
Not all the pains that e'er I bore
Shall spoil my future peace,
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please.

Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart. Ps. xxvi. 2. *Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

WOULD David, the man after God's own heart, not trust himself, but present his heart to the Lord to be tried? much less can or ought we to trust our hearts; "for he that trusteth in his own heart," says the wise man, "is a fool." Prov. xxviii. 26. We have more reason to be afraid of our own hearts than of all other enemies. It is not necessary for us to know when or by what means the Lord searches our hearts; but every one that is really in a state of grace, and walking in the fear of the Lord, will pray to him to search the heart, and to deliver him from every wicked way. The Holy Spirit hath various ways of searching the hearts of his people, and makes use of different means with the same person. We are not to limit the mode nor the extent of his operations; but it is our duty to pray, that he will in everything guide us in the way that leadeth to everlasting life. Some may be worked upon very differently from what we have been; but the whole is under the direction of infinite wisdom, and tends to manifest the glory of divine grace in our salvation. All things work together for good to them that love God. Rom. viii. 28.

Lord, search my soul, try every thought;
Though my own heart accuse me not
Of walking in a false disguise,
I beg the trial of thine eyes.

Lord, all my desire is before thee. Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name. Ps. xxxviii. 9, and lxxxvi. 11.

ENCOURAGED by thy blessed word of promise, O Lord, that, before men call, thou wilt answer, and whilst they are yet speaking, thou wilt hear (Isa. lxv. 24), I now draw nigh to thee, and present my supplication before thee. Teach me, by thy word and Spirit, the things of my everlasting peace. Let my soul be cast into the mould of the Gospel, and let me be obedient to thy will in all things. Manifest thyself unto me, as thou dost not to the world; show me my inward corruptions, and let me see into the depth of iniquity that is in my heart; grant me that fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom; incline my heart unto thy testimonies; lead me into all truth; help me to learn, that he that believeth will not make haste; restrain the impetuosity of my natural temper, that I may do all things deliberately, as becometh one that feareth alway, that is ever looking unto thee for direction. Lord, preserve me calm in my spirit, gentle in my commands, and watchful, that I speak not unadvisedly with my lips; moderate in my purposes, yielding in my temper, where the honour of my God is not immediately concerned; and ever steadfast where needful. Lord, grant me thy protection; and may thy blessing be upon me, that I may not bring an evil report upon that good land I was permitted to spy out; but walk honourably through the wilderness, and pass triumphantly over Jordan into Canaan. Amen.

Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Luke xiii. 24. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Phil. ii. 12. *Forgetting those things that are behind, I reach forth unto those things which are before.* Phil. iii. 13.

THE road to heaven is called a narrow road, because the travellers on it are not permitted to turn either to the one side or the other; such turnings are sin. The gate to this road is called strait, because on entering, you deny yourselves to all the pleasures of the world. He that feeds only upon Christ, and yet with fear and trembling works out his own salvation, is in the narrow way; the former preventing discouragement, and the latter presumption. Grant, O God, that I may still continue to fight the good fight of faith, and never look back on the flesh-pots of Egypt, but "rather choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." May the painful death which thou sufferedst on the cross, have an abiding place in my heart, that thereby unbelief and slavish fear may be destroyed on the one hand, and security on the other; that I may walk at all times and in all places with holy and filial reverence, as in thy presence. Amen.

As new-born babes desire the breast,
To feed, and grow, and thrive;
So saints with joy the gospel taste,
And by the gospel live.

Grace, like an uncorrupted seed,
Abides and reigns within;
Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin.

David's Prayer.—*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* Ps. li. 10.
Divine Answer.—*And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.* Ezek. xi. 19, 20.

A GLORIOUS promise which may be relied on, and will certainly be fulfilled if heartily pleaded in prayer. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." Matt. v. 8. In regard to justification, we are perfectly clean by Christ's atonement; but in regard to sanctification, our hearts are not perfectly clean yet, but we have still need to pray "Create in me a clean heart." Amen. O Lord! may thy blood and Spirit cleanse and sanctify me thoroughly from all my sins! Amen.

Blessed with the joys of innocence
Adam our father stood,
Till he debased his soul to sense,
And ate th' unlawful food.

Now we are born a sensual race,
To sinful joys inclined;
Reason has lost its native place,
And flesh enslaved the mind.

Great God! renew our ruined frame,
Our broken powers restore;
Inspire us with a heavenly flame,
And flesh shall reign no more!

Eternal Spirit, write thy law
Upon our inward parts!
And let the second Adam draw
His image on our hearts!

And Enoch walked with God. Gen. v. 24.

HAPPY are they who, in their early days, are turned from sin, themselves, and the world, by repentance towards God, and faith in the promised seed, as Enoch was, who, from the time of his conversion, walked with God in a continued progress in his works and ways. To "walk with God" is to come out from a sinful generation and cleave to the Lord, as Noah and Caleb did; and God requires this of all believers. 2 Cor. vi. 17. It is setting the Lord before our eyes continually, and fearing him always, as Joseph and Nehemiah did; thereby avoiding everything that would offend him. It is also making an open profession of faith in him and zeal for his service, as our highest honour and best interest. And farther, it is such a walk as obtains a holy intimacy and communion with God, which is kept up by constant meditation, prayer and praise; hearkening to the voice of his word and Spirit, and walking humbly before him; hereby holiness is promoted and encouraged in the soul. Thus "Enoch walked with God;" thus he maintained a holy confidence in him, committing all his ways to him, always expecting help from him, and rejoicing in the hope of being with him for ever.

For these happy ends the grace of God is sufficient for all that see their want, and ask it. The Lord help us to seek it, that, like Enoch, we may walk with God here below, and live with him for ever in glory. Amen.

See that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Eph. v. 15, 17. *That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence.* Phil. i. 10. See also Luke xii. 36.

BELIEVERS have nothing more at heart than the will of God; being once convinced of that, they immediately set about it at all hazards; but sometimes they cannot come to a thorough knowledge of the same without great conflicts and patience. "For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Heb. x. 36. For the flesh is exceedingly crafty and froward; and though often forbid to go, it is as often calling out, "Howsoever, let me run." 2 Sam. xviii. 23. But the Lord will nevertheless carry them through. Yes, Lord, this thou hast done innumerable times. O that I might trust thee also for the time to come, and not be so weak in faith any more. O that my soul could feel at home with God as in the presence of a kind father, and being glad in his presence, I might trust his offered grace, and walk not as the foolish but as the wise, knowing and doing the will of the Lord.

Beloved self must be denied,
The mind and will renewed;
Passion suppressed, and patience tried,
And vain desires subdued.

Flesh is a dangerous foe to grace,
Where it prevails and rules;
Flesh must be humbled, pride abased,
Lest they destroy our souls.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. 1 Pet. iv. 14, 19. *Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.* Luke vi. 23. *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.* Matt. x. 32, 33.

EVERY real Christian must expect persecution from the world, and though he should take heed of giving needless offence by self-will or rash conduct of any kind, yet should he not seek to shun the cross by what some men call prudence, or a sneaking compliance with the world, but be willing to suffer everything, rather than to hurt the cause of God in the least. We should openly confess Christ our Lord, and not mind being called fools by the wicked, as we know that at last they will call themselves by that name; therefore care not for the approbation and praise of the world; but count it a great honour to bear the reproach of Christ. Be willing rather to suffer persecution, and to be one of the despised in this world, than that the name of the Lord should suffer any dishonour, by the countenance you may wish to give to some sin in order to avoid offence. O my soul, flee such temptation. It is not the will of the Lord that you yield

Blessed are the suff'rers who partake
Of pain and shame for Jesu's sake;
Their souls shall triumph in the Lord;
Glory and joy are their reward.
The lamb shall lead his heavenly flock,
Where living fountains rise,
And love divine shall wipe away
All sorrow from their eyes.

'ake heed to your spirit. Malachi ii. 15. *Those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man.* Matt. xv. 18. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?* Jer. xvii. 9. *The imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil continually.* Gen. vi. 5.

PRIVATE loop-holes, sinful lusts, can hide themselves at times so well as to seem quite dead; but if we grow careless they spring up again on a favourable occasion, and sometimes appear in a spiritual shape, and take a fine spiritual name. Thus, though the flesh exceedingly likes sensual indulgences, yet to flatter its lust of pride and the vanity of being thought a perfect man, it will sometimes endure great mortification. Therefore we ought always to be jealous of ourselves, and guard as much against self-righteousness as licentiousness; for the flesh is never more fleshly and dangerous than when it has the most spiritual appearance, and covers its lusts with the holiness and spirituality of angels.

Sin has a thousand treach'rous arts,
To practise on the mind;
With flatt'ring looks she tempts our hearts,
But leaves a sting behind.

With names of virtue she deceives
The aged and the young;
And while the heedless wretch believes
She makes his fetters strong.

She pleads for all the joy she brings,
And gives a fair pretence;
But cheats the soul of heavenly things,
And chains it down to sense.

David's Prayer.—*O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.* Ps. xliii. 3.

Divine Answer.—*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Prov. iv. 18.

THE wiser we are in our own conceits, the more negligent are we in prayer, and the more destitute of true wisdom and faith; the more carnal are our feelings, the more trust and peace have we in our own righteousness: for the Lord gives sight only to the blind, and to the babes, who pray for it. Therefore the deepest humblings go before the greatest blessings. O my blessed Saviour! since I am always blind and ignorant of myself, if I am not guided by thine eyes, I desire always to look up to thee, and do everything under thy direction. "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." "Let thy mercies come unto me, O Lord; even thy salvation according to thy word." Ps. cxix. 41.

Prevent me, lest I harbour pride,
Lest I in my own strength confide;
Show me my weakness: let me see
I have my power, my all from thee.

Enrich me always with thy love,
My kind protector ever prove!
The signet put upon my breast,
And let thy Spirit on me rest.

Assist and teach me how to pray,
Incline my nature to obey;
What thou abhorrest let me flee,
And only love what pleases thee!

By grace ye are saved through faith. It is the gift of God. Eph. ii. 8. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* Titus iii. 5, 6. See also John iii. 3, 5.

TO rely on grace, and desire to be saved only by free grace, is a sweet exercise; but so far from being practised enough, we have all need to learn the prayer of the Publican better still, since the Pharisee is ever busy to creep in again. But care must be taken that we do not build our faith only upon the sweet enjoyments of the grace of God, as it is procured by Christ, and promised to us through Christ; for which reason God sometimes denies us sensible enjoyments, that true faith may begin to act like itself, and depend upon nothing but his free grace in Christ. And this we have also boldness to do, should we ever seem to fall short of the due measure of faith, godly sorrow and repentance; for since there is no merit to be placed in these things, there is no certain measure and degree prescribed to all; but it is enough truly to hate sin, to desire grace, and sincerely to enter upon the Christian race.

'Tis not by works of righteousness
Which our own hands have done;
But we are saved by sov'reign grace,
Abounding through his Son.

'Tis from the mercy of our God
That all our hopes begin;
'Tis by the water and the blood
Our souls are washed from sin.

Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law; and ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins. 1 John iii. 4, 5. *All unrighteousness is sin.* Chap. v. 17. *When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Heb. i. 3.

THERE is a far greater power in the blood of Christ to save and cleanse, than in sin to defile and destroy. Rom. viii. 3. The law became weak to do good, but it hath power to condemn: "The strength of sin is the law:" the law gives strength to sin, because, by virtue of the curse of the law, sin reigns and defiles the souls of men, through that righteous curse, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But the blood of Jesus Christ hath greater power to save, than sin, together with the law, hath to condemn; for the blood of Christ takes away, and abolishes it utterly; where this blood is applied and brought home, sin itself cannot ruin that soul. The soul is poisoned and corrupted by sin; but the blood of Christ takes away the guilt of sin, yet not the being of it; as we are sanctified but in part, we can only plead with God that we may be kept by almighty power, and that Jesus may be for us, who is stronger than all that can come against us.

O dear incarnate Son of God,
Well wash me in thy precious blood!
Cast all my guilt into that sea,
And let no lust have power o'er me.
The shafts against my soul that sin and Satan wield,
Ward off, and be to me a refuge sure and shield.

Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Ps. xxxii. 9. Therefore, *if ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* 1 Pet. i. 17.

READER, dost thou believe there is a God, and that he will shortly judge thee for every evil action thou hast done, and for all the secret iniquity of thy bosom?—how then canst thou meet thy Judge, unless thy heart be changed and thy sins are pardoned? There will be no room for dissembling, excusing, or escaping then. Begin therefore in time, O wretched man, to consider how thou must appear before that awful judgment-seat! The door of mercy is yet open. Oh! call upon the Lord Jesus for repentance and pardon, before the door be shut, and thou be lost for ever. The gulf of destruction is standing with an open mouth ready to receive thee; Jesus is also standing with his arms stretched widely out to receive and to welcome thee back to his Father and to thy Father's love. Whither dost thou choose to go? O, go to Jesus!

O God, mine inmost soul convert;
And deeply on my thoughtful heart
Eternal things impress;
Give me to feel their solemn weight,
And tremble on the brink of fate,
And wake to righteousness!

Be strong and of a good courage, I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Only be thou strong and very courageous! O sweet commandment! *Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.* O glorious promise! Joshua i. 5, 6, 9. See also Isa. xxxv.

GOD calls upon us to be strong in faith; and strong faith will make men cheerful and courageous, and enable them to overcome strong difficulties. Therefore, if thy feet and heart are bound for Canaan, trust stoutly in the Lord to carry thee safely through all the trials and temptations that beset thy path, and to defend thee in all thy conflicts with the world and with Satan. Feeble as thou art, yet go on and fear nothing, for God is with thee. He that has but this one care and fear, not to displease him, need not care for or fear anything else; his safety is ensured in the promise of God, who will keep him harmless in all things. O thou God of Israel, who didst lead thine ancient people to their desired rest, grant me to be strong and courageous in thee, while travelling to *my* Canaan of peace, and may thy fear fill my heart.

Awake, our souls, away our fears,
Let every trembling thought be gone;
Awake, and run the heavenly race,
And put a cheerful courage on.

True, 'tis a strait and thorny road,
And mortal spirits tire and faint;
But they forget the mighty God,
That feeds the strength of every saint.

Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world! John i. 29. *These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.* Rev. vii. 14, 15.

THESE are they who have obtained pardon and purification through the blood of the Lamb; they are the Lamb's wife, arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. Rev. xix. 8. And it is because they are washed in the blood of the Lamb, that they are admitted to the immediate presence of God, and are before the throne. Nothing that is impure or unholy, or that defileth, can come there. He that washes himself continually in the blood of Christ, does not make light of sin, but detests it above all things; for what can be more abominable than sin, since it cannot be taken away but by the blood of the Son of God? This humbles true believers, and makes them watch against sin; and if it has not the same effect on thee, Reader, matters are not right with thy soul; for, talking of the blood of the Lamb, and yet trifling with sin, cannot agree together, but show a false or a deceived heart.

Now will I hate those lusts of mine
That crucified my God:
Those sins that pierced and nailed his flesh
Fast to the fatal wood.

Yes, my Redeemer, they shall die,
My heart has so decreed;
Nor will I spare the guilty things
That made my Saviour bleed.

Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. Matt. vi. 2. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* 2 Tim. iv. 8.

FOR this crown faith strives. And because this faith justifies, it makes the world say,—Well, I also believe. But where is their conflict and conquest? It is answered, I rely on Christ and grace. But Canaan was also a free gift of grace, and yet it was not taken without conflicts. And, moreover, as worldly people are unacquainted with the wickedness of their hearts, they do not trust alone upon grace, but on their duties and the outward form of godliness; self-love, and pride, still reigning in their hearts. When shalt thou, my soul, be driven from thy earthly stay, when shalt thou hope alone in Jesus, and be saved? How long shalt thou trust in an arm of flesh? O turn now unto the Lord who begat thee, and in his strength fight, and thou shalt overcome all thine enemies; in him have faith, and with thee all shall be well.

No works nor duties of your own
Can for the smallest sin atone;
The robes that nature may provide
Will not your least pollutions hide.
Ye sons of pride that kindle coals
With your own hands to warm your souls,
Walk in the light of your own fire,
Enjoy the sparks that ye desire.
This is your portion at my hands,
Hell waits you with her iron bands;
You shall lie down in sorrow there,
In death, in darkness, and despair.

Let us run with patience the race set before us. Heb. xii. 1.

HE that runs, and wants patience, will never get to the end of his race; for in the race of God's commandments men have foul play; one comes and rails on him for his zeal, for running so fast, when he thinks himself too slow; another gives him a blow, and strikes him down; and up he gets and runs again. Every man will make room and give way to him that is in a race here: while he that runs the heavenly race may expect, and will find, many stand in his way, and stop him all they can, so that he will have great need of patience: without it everything will offend him. What is a wise man, a zealous man, without patience? He will bear nothing, suffer nothing, and can do no great good. David had many enemies that spake mischievous things against him, and laid snares for his life; but he was as a deaf man that "heard not; and as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth." Saul was twice in his power, yet he would not avenge himself of him; he wanted neither courage nor wisdom; he had a stirring spirit, a working head, was sensible of wrongs, knew himself innocent, his adversaries malicious; his thoughts must needs be troubled, and yet he was his own man under all; he committed his cause to God, his patience was in exercise, and he waited God's time of deliverance. Christ's active and passive obedience made him a complete mediator: may thine, Reader, make thee a complete Christian.

Whom God set forth to be a propitiation (mercy-seat) *through faith in his blood, &c.* Rom. iii. 25.

GOD hath set forth the propitiation. From all eternity he proposed Christ to be the mercy-seat. The spring of all is from the Father, who is love; he proposed, revealed, and made Christ known to Adam, to Abraham, and to the Prophets; he proposed the mercy-seat as an object of faith in all the sacrifices that were types of Christ; this mercy-seat is clearly and fully set forth in the gospel dispensation.

Whither shall I, a poor sinner, conscious of guilt, and apprehensive of wrath, flee for refuge? Where shall I find it? Where but under the covert of atoning blood? While others have recourse to refuges of lies, and would establish a righteousness of their own, in the Lord, my righteousness, I find rest and safety. Having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before me, in Christ, my hope, I shall have strong consolation. Does Jehovah from this mercy-seat offer pardon to me, a rebel sinner? Do I not hear his voice of mercy, and live, and joy in God, through Christ? Will God commune with me from this mercy-seat, and bless me with the manifestation of his love? O delightful interview, when most alone, retired from the world, but least alone when with my God! O the inexpressible pleasure of secret devotion, of "a life hid with Christ in God"! If the contemplation of divine love here below be so ravishing, O what shall I experience above! My God, guide me here by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.

No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Matt. vi. 24. *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* Gal. i. 10. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* 1 John ii. 15.

DOTH Satan tempt thee, either by pleasures, dignities, or profits? O my soul, stand upon thy guard, gird on thy strength with such thoughts as these:—What can the world profit me, if the cares of it choke me? How can pleasures comfort me, if their sting poison me? or what advancement is this, to be triumphing in honour before the face of men here, and to be trembling with confusion before the throne of God hereafter? What are the delights of the world to the peace of my conscience, or the joy that is in the Holy Ghost? What are the applauses of men to the crown prepared by God? or, what is the gain of the world to the loss of my soul? The vanity of the creature is far beneath the excellency of my soul; and the things of time not worthy to be mentioned with the things of eternity. Two masters, of such opposite principles as God and Mammon, I cannot serve; therefore, Satan, upon the most deliberate consideration, I must give thee and thy service up, for thou biddest me to my loss.

Two masters are too much for me;
Nor can the world with God agree;
Then, tempting Mammon, get thee gone,
And let me serve my Christ alone

O taste and see that the Lord is good! Ps. xxxiv. 8. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.* Heb. xiii. 8.

THERE is an infinite fulness of all spiritual blessings treasured up in Christ Jesus for all his people; and out of his fulness they do receive, even grace for grace. But, alas! we are slow of heart to believe the truth: we please ourselves with small things, and come slowly forward to a daily growth out of that fulness. Young converts, enamoured with what they have in hand, or living upon their feelings, are ready to flee from knowledge, as something dangerous, and destructive of holiness; and mere professors are apt to deny and even deride those precious feelings, as though the affections had no share in the Christian religion, and the whole consisted in having a crowded head. Come then, O my soul, divest thyself of the pride of party and the strife of tongues! Be thou an humble supplicant at the feet of Jesus for a live coal from off the altar, to purge away thine iniquity, and to warm thy affections; and likewise for the aid of the Holy Spirit, to lead thee into "the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Then shalt thou not only taste but see, not only see but taste, both sweetly taste and clearly see that "the Lord is good."

O the rich depths of love divine,
Of bliss a boundless store:
Dear Saviour, let me call thee mine;
I cannot wish for more.

We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. 1 Cor. ii. 7. *Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.* Col. i. 26.

THERE are some things declared in the gospel, which are absolutely its own, that are proper and peculiar unto it; such as have no footsteps in the law or in the light of nature, but are of pure revelation, peculiar to the gospel. Of this nature are all things concerning the love and will of God in Jesus Christ; the mystery of his incarnation, of his offices and whole mediation, of the dispensation of the Spirit and our participation thereof, and our union with Christ thereby; our adoption, justification, and effectual sanctification thence proceeding. In a word, everything that belongs unto the purchase and application of saving grace is of this sort. These tidings are properly evangelical, being peculiar to the Gospel alone. Hence the apostle Paul, unto whom the dispensation of it was committed, puts that eminency upon them, that, in comparison, he resolved to insist on nothing else in his preaching. 1 Cor. ii. 2. And to that purpose doth he describe his ministry. Eph. iii. 7–11.

Reader, observe these two things:—What God reveals in his word, let thy reason submit unto;—What he proposes as objects or matter of faith, beg of him to enable thee to believe.

The hidden wisdom of God's grace
No reason can explore;
Then help me, by the Spirit's light,
To see, believe, adore.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Eph. i. 3.

FROM natural constitution we earnestly expect present gratification. It is by no means sufficient, therefore, to explain to us our duty, or enforce it by future rewards and punishments. There must be pleasures at hand, to outweigh the enticements of sin, and outbid whatever that sorceress can offer. The religion of Jesus is constituted in this manner: it brings the possession of the best happiness here—a rich foretaste in this life of heavenly glory. Salvation cometh of the Lord to the sinner upon believing, just as a most ample estate bequeathed to a beggar in debt; at once it alters his whole condition, pays all he owes, supplies all he wants, gives him a rank, figure, and authority, to which before he was a perfect stranger. Such blessedness in the pardon of all my sins, in access to God with confidence, in victory over my spiritual enemies, give me, O my God, to enjoy!

Thou only Sov'reign of my heart,
My refuge, my almighty Friend,
How can my soul from thee depart,
On whom alone my hopes depend!

Eternal life thy words impart;
On these my fainting spirit lives;
Here sweeter comforts cheer my heart
Than all the round of nature gives.

Let earth's alluring joys combine;
While thou art near in vain they call;
One smile, one blissful smile of thine,
My dearest Lord, outweighs them all.

Spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Isa. liv. 2, 3.

HOW comfortable is it to the religious man to behold an increase of the true worshippers of God! and more especially in that place where his soul has dwelt among lions, and been "vexed from day to day with the filthy conversation of the wicked"! To see the banner of Christ set up there, and numbers flock unto it, as doves to their windows; to see the kingdom of Satan weaken and contract, and the kingdom of God and his Christ strengthen and enlarge; to see the hand of the Lord protecting and providing for his people; going before them like the pillar and cloud, refreshing them by day and by night: this is indeed a feast of fat things. Lord, grant that I may be thankful for what I have already seen, and may behold thy glory thus displayed more and more. And while thou lengthenest our cords, do thou help us to strengthen our stakes, by holding fast the form of sound words, living as persons professing godliness, showing that we are Christians indeed, by love to each other, and keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Thus shall our light shine before men, and the light of thy gospel break forth on the right hand and on the left, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Arise, thou Sun of Righteousness,
And bless the world with heavenly light;
Break forth and show thy Gospel grace,
Attended with thy Spirit's might.

If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully (namely, in faith, by which we have the victory). 2 Tim. ii. 5. And as the enemies return again and again, and are always crafty and strong, we must continually be in arms. *Until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.* Matt. xi. 12.

WITH what is all this striving, and against what is this violence to be used? Let the Christian, him who strives lawfully, tell. All hell opens every step he takes. He is determined to have his soul saved; and to help him to this, all his sins, all his evil companions, are to be fought and vanquished. But to win heaven, he must strive lawfully, that is, strive in faith. If those cannot expect to be crowned who strive, but not lawfully, what must become of those who do not strive at all? O Lord, strengthen me therefore to get the victory, for it greatly exalts thy glory, if the power of mine enemies be broken; and thy grace is able to overcome the greatest power of sin, and will destroy it effectually at last, since thou hast promised that grace shall endure, and grow, and conquer, while sin is condemned to death, and is actually dying more and more, when nailed to the cross of Christ.

Stand up, my soul, shake off thy fears,
 And gird the Gospel armour on;
March to the gates of endless joys,
 Where thy great Captain Saviour's gone.

What though the Prince of Darkness rage,
 And waste the fury of his spite?
Eternal chains confine him down
 To fiery deeps and endless night.

It is not of him that willeth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Rom. ix. 16. *Thou hast a little strength.* Rev. iii. 8. *But go in this thy might, &c. Surely I will be with thee.* Judges vi. 14, 16.

A LITTLE strength is also the strength of God through Christ, the second Adam, and consequently stronger than the power of Satan and the first Adam, should it seem ever so strong. Believers in such a state may think themselves weaker than before they had any grace, not being able now to put such a force upon themselves as formerly, because they dare not now be wrought on by pride: for they no longer swim with the stream, and experience no resistance; but swimming against the stream, feel the force of the current of lust. But it is to be remembered, that hypocrisy and proud nature, desirous of being seen, can outdo grace in many outward things, and have a better appearance in the eyes of man; for real Christians, not being willing to be worked upon by nature any longer, and yet having but little strength, cannot put such a constraint upon themselves continually, but they may be in this manner tossed to and fro; which the Lord wisely permits for their good, to convince them the more of their own insufficiency and nothingness, that they may rely on the strength of the Lord. Therefore we must not give over praying and hoping in this case; but as it is only the mercy and power of Christ which preserve and strengthens the poor and feeble, we rather ought to be more earnest in drawing near to him with all our misery, weariness, and nakedness.

If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 2 Peter ii. 20.

SOME affirm that experienced Christians meet with no strong temptations, and feel no evil suggestions from within, and, of consequence, no strivings against the same; but it is quite the contrary; for beginners strive generally more against the outward pollutions of the world, whilst the experienced turn their force more against their inward and spiritual iniquities. Therefore take heed to your spirit, though your meaning be ever so good, and your assurance ever so great. Be not high-minded, for fear of falling. Beware of all sins; for the least may unawares, and by degrees, draw thee into many others, so as to be at last entangled in such a manner, that without great watchfulness it will be impossible to be disengaged; therefore be not deceived; flee all occasions of sin. Say not within thyself, It is a light matter, it only concerns outward things, which do not belong to the essence of Christianity; for such outward liberty is a sure evidence of a false inward levity of mind. And by conforming to the world, we give a good handle to the enemy of souls to ruin us; and by sad experience, we shall be convinced in time that our latter end is worse than the beginning.

O for a persevering power
To keep thy just commands;
We would defile our hearts no more,
No more pollute our hands.

Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. xii. 10, 18. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* Heb. xii. 14.

THERE is much contest in the world about property; but believers taking Christ for their only property, whom nobody can take from them, have in him alone immense treasures and lasting peace. And since wrath and anger turn into nothing but disquietness, and are punished by themselves, why dost thou suffer thyself to be easily moved by them? The least provocation, even a single word, perhaps, will stir up the corruption of thine heart, so as to change thy countenance and make thee utter dreadful words. Therefore, consider how God bears with thee, and what an abomination anger is. It is a fire from Hell, the true image of the old Dragon; but being called to bear the image of God, and bring forth the fruits of the good Spirit, thou art to follow the lamb-like mind of Christ; and to that purpose it is highly necessary first, To avoid all occasions of strife and contention. Secondly, To bridle our tongue, if quarrels arise. Thirdly, To suffer when we are wronged. Fourthly, To pray directly, and quench the sparks of fire, before they break out into a flame. This is the easiest and the only method to prevent great troubles, and lead a peaceful, happy life: for anger carries uneasiness; and love a sweet rest in itself.

Blessed are the men of peaceful life,
Who quench the coals of growing strife;
They shall be called the heirs of bliss,
The sons of God, the God of Peace.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, &c., let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; having our hearts sprinkled (with the blood of Christ, by which *he once entered into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and purged our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God) from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Heb. x. 19–22.

CHRIST has for ever purged our sins by himself; "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," chap. x. 14; and to this sprinkling of the blood of Christ, all believers, even the weakest, are to come, in order to receive the forgiveness of sins; and the blood is said to be sprinkled, to show the need of its application to the conscience by the Holy Spirit. In this purple fountain the believer daily washes; it is his element and life. Thus he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who also loved him, always applying his ransom to his soul, and pleading his merits before his heavenly Father, which keeps his conscience pure and easy. O may I be enabled every day, by faith, to wash in the fountain of Christ's blood.

They find access at every hour,
To God within the veil;
Hence they derive a quick'ning power,
And joys that never fail.

O may this happy lot be mine,
Daily to live to Christ;
And like the favoured of the twelve,
To lean upon his breast.

O happy soul! O glorious state
Of ever-flowing grace!
To dwell so near the Father's throne,
And see his holy face.

That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. Rom. i. 19. *Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? &c.* Acts xiv. 14, to end.

THERE are some things declared and enjoined in the Gospel which have their foundation in the law and light of nature; such are all the moral duties which are taught therein; these, though obscurely, the remaining light of nature, nevertheless, teaches and confirms. The apostle, speaking of mankind in general, says, "That which may be known of God, is manifest in them;" the essential properties of God rendering our moral duty to him necessary, are known by the light of nature; and by the same light are men able to make a judgment of their actions, whether they be good or evil. Rom. ii. 14, 15. The same law and light, which discover these things, do also enjoin their observance. Thus it is with all men before the preaching of the Gospel to them. The Gospel adds two things to the minds of men. 1. It directs us to a right performance of these things from a right principle, by a right rule, and to a right end, so that they, and we in them, may obtain acceptance with God. Hereby it gives them a new nature, and turns moral duties into evangelical obedience. 2. By a communication of that Spirit, which is joined to its dispensation, it supplies us with strength for their performance in the manner it directs.

May God the fruits of heavenly grace
Produce within my heart;
And by that grace may many learn
To choose the better part.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii. 35, 37–39.

STARS shine brightest in the darkest night; torches are better for beating; grapes come not to the proof till they come to the press; spices smell best when bruised; young trees root the faster for shaking; gold looks brighter for scouring; juniper smells sweetest in the fire; the palm-tree proves the better for pressing; camomile, the more you tread it the more you spread it. Such is the condition of all God's children: they are then most triumphant, when most tempted; most glorious, when most afflicted; most in favour of God, when least in man's and least in their own: as their conflicts, so their conquests; as their tribulations, so their triumphs; true salamanders, that live best in the furnace of persecution: so that heavy afflictions are the best benefactors to heavenly affections; and where afflictions hang heaviest, corruptions hang loosest; and grace, that is hid in nature, as sweet water in rose-leaves, is then most fragrant when the fire of affliction is put under to distil it out.

My life, and all its comforts too,
From God's abundant bounty flow:
And when he calleth back his own,
Contented I would lay it down.

Then if men scorn and Satan roar,
Yet, strengthened by the God of power,
His faithful witness I shall be;
Though weak, I can do all through Thee.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land, &c. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, &c. Song of Sol. ii. 10–14.

O LORD, how often has it been winter with me, but thou hast always quickened me again! Grant that by these experiences I may be so used to thy ways, as always to expect the best from thee in everything, and to have only this one care, namely, how I may please thee as thy bride and dove, and be accepted through thee with thy Father! Let my faith be so strengthened by all thy various dealings with me, that at last I may have boldness, and find complete rest in thy wounds, my crucified Saviour, where there is room for the greatest of sinners, even for me who am the chief.

The voice of my Beloved sounds
Over the rocks and rising grounds;
O'er hills of guilt, and seas of grief,
He leaps, he flies to my relief.

Gently he draws my heart along,
Both with his beauty and his tongue;
Rise, says my Lord, make haste, away;
No mortal joys are worth thy stay.

The Jewish wintry state is gone,
The mists are fled, the spring comes on;
The sacred turtle-dove we hear,
Proclaim the new, the joyful year.

And when we hear our Jesus say,
"Rise up, my love, make haste, away!"
Our hearts would fain outfly the wind,
And leave all earthly loves behind.

Be not conformed to this world. Rom. xii. 2. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, &c. He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.* 1 John ii. 15, 17.

READER, whose will dost thou do? Examine thyself. Perhaps thou thinkest, to love the world and to do its will cannot be a great sin, because many reputed honest men and good Christians do the same. Nay, but for thy soul's sake consider what the scripture says, If thou love the world, the love of the Father is not in thee; and without this love of the Father, thou hast no faith; and, being destitute of faith, thou hast no Christ, and consequently no life and salvation. Consider further, whether thou dost not love the world above either God or thy own soul. Hast thou not a hundred thoughts about the world for one of God or thy soul? Dost thou not talk a hundred times more about the world, and is not thy pursuit continually after it, to the neglect of God and thy soul? Then, the world is thine idol; thou lovest not God, and art murdering thy soul. The Lord have mercy on thee!

I send the things of earth away:
 Away, ye tempters of the mind,
False as the smooth, deceitful sea,
 And empty as the whistling wind.
Your streams were floating me along,
 Down to the gulf of black despair;
And whilst I listen to your song,
 Your streams had near conveyed me there.
Lord, I adore thy matchless grace,
 That warned me of the deep abyss;
That drew me from those treach'rous seas,
 And bade me seek superior bliss.

Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, &c.* 1 Pet. iv. 3.

NONE can be so sure of salvation as to be for ever free from fears and doubts; for there is no assurance without conflicts: therefore all diligence is required, to be evermore sure of it, so as to have boldness, even in death. But let us take heed of presumption, since we do not know what may befall us at last, and be careful not to despise or overdrive the weaker sort of Christians, nor make our own experience a general rule for others, lest this comfortable doctrine of assurance prove a torment to them who have not yet attained it. Let all who have received a measure of grace be thankful; yet not rest in it; but press forward, fighting the good fight of faith, till they lay hold on eternal life.

How short and hasty is our life!
How vast our soul's affairs!
Yet senseless mortals vainly strive
To lavish out their years.

God from on high invites us home,
But we march heedless on:
And ever hast'ning to the tomb,
Stoop downward as we run.

How we deserve the deepest hell
That slight the joys above!
What chains of vengeance should we feel
That break such cords of love!

For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke xix. 10.

WHOEVER seriously seeks to be saved both from the power and punishment of sin, and seeks deliverance only through Christ, should not give way to heaviness of heart; for consider, Art thou a lost sinner? Christ's salvation is brought to such. Art thou seeking his salvation? This is a good token that Christ has sought thee, else thou wouldst not seek after him. Whom Christ seeks he saves. Now, therefore, call upon him diligently to set up his kingdom in thy bosom, and say to thyself, O my soul, it was the very purpose of Christ's coming into the world to save sinners circumstanced just as thou art! yea, though thy sins be as scarlet, be not thou cast down, O my soul, and be not disquieted within me, but encourage a cheerful hope in thy covenant God, and instead of poring only upon thy sins, consider the exceeding love of Christ in dying for them; and, constrained by a sense of that love, do thy diligence to live unto him; and for this he will enable thee by his Holy Spirit.

The Lord of life and glory stands;
Aloud he cries and spreads his hands;
He calls ten thousand sinners round,
And sends a voice from every wound.
"An ample pardon here I give,
And bid the sentenced rebel live;
Show him my Father's smiling face,
And lodge him in his dear embrace.
I purge from sin's detested stain,
And make the crimson white again;
Lead to celestial joys refined,
And lasting as the deathless mind."

., change your minds) and believe the gospel. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to ', for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matt. iv. *it ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins tted out, when the times of refreshing shall come vresence of the Lord.* Acts iii. 19.

ITANCE, or a godly sorrow for sin, is the trine of the Gospel. This is absolutely to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a nion and communion with him. O reader, ist calls thee to repent; Jesus calls thee to the God of heaven and earth calls thee to and without it thou wilt perish eternally in s of hell. Canst thou not give thyself the repentance? Thou canst not. O then pray to the blessed Jesus, that his Holy Spirit duce this saving change in thee. Pray to he would give thee a living, justifying faith lood and righteousness, and that thy heart filled with real sorrow for sin, with holy on against it, and with a sincere and active y from it. O pray that you may walk by i not by sight, as seeing him continually, he natural eye is invisible.

Mistaken souls, that dream of heaven,
And make their empty boast
Of inward joys and sins forgiven,
While they are slaves to lust!

Vain are our fancy's airy flights,
If faith be cold and dead;
None but a living power unites
To Christ the living head.

What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch. Mark xiii. 37. See also ver. 3, and chap. xiv. 38.

ON a day set apart for the celebration of some great event, how anxious are the people to get in time to the place appointed! What earnestness is to be seen in their looks! As earnest should we be in watching for the hour in which our Lord shall come, that we may not be ashamed before him. A heart deceived by sin may suggest many arguments against this holy earnestness; but they are the reasonings of folly. It is a general warning, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Almost every day affords an instance of some one hurried into eternity on a sudden. Were not hourly watchfulness necessary, a merciful God would not permit such sudden deaths. But he has sounded the alarm, Ye know not what hour our Lord cometh.—Give me grace, O Lord, to live always as if I heard that solemn voice sounding continually in my ears, "Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment!"

Awake, my drowsy soul, awake,
 And view the threat'ning scene;
Legions of foes encamp around,
 And treachery lurks within.

Now to the work of God awake;
 Behold thy Master near;
The various, arduous task pursue,
 With vigour and with fear.

The awful register goes on;
 Th' account will surely come;
And opening day or closing night
 May bear me to my doom.

David's Prayer.—*Now also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not.* Ps. lxxi. 18. *O keep my soul and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.* Ps. xxv. 20, 21.

Divine Answer.—*Hearken unto me, house of Jacob, which are borne by me from the belly. Even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you.* Isa. xlvi. 3, 4.

GOD never does forsake a true believer, since he is as closely united to Christ as a child to its mother whilst carried in her womb. Yea, a mother may forget her sucking child; but Jesus never forgets his ransomed people. His eyes are upon them for good continually; they are graven on the palms of his hands, and lodged in his pierced side, close to his heart. We may expect everything confidently from him; and this confidence pleaseth him above all things. Then, O may I be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make my requests known unto him (Phil. iv. 6); always trusting that he will as certainly carry me through all difficulties to come as he has done hitherto; so that I may even give him thanks for it beforehand. O Lord, grant that I may practise this better still!

My God, my everlasting hope,
I live upon thy truth;
Thine hands have held my childhood up,
And strengthened all my youth.
Still has my life new wonders seen
Repeated every year:
Behold my days that yet remain,
I trust them to thy care.

e not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, mple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these; oroughly amend your ways and your doings, &c. Jer. 5. *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must ip him in spirit and in truth.* John iv. 24. See also xii. 1. James i. 27.

contrite heart is the most pleasing temple of God, o speaking with God in words of our own, as a oes with his father, is the best book of prayer. ost cunning method, by which Satan deceives ow, is the mistaking of an extensive knowledge assurance of their own making, not witnessed Spirit for true faith; or trusting on some outward f worship, or having communion with others, ending to Gospel-experience and liberty, and claiming the office of building up souls, a true change was never wrought in their earts; for what can all our reading, prayers, to church and sacrament, profit us, without Before all this shall be acceptable to the Lord, st be renewed in our minds, and prove by our ords and deeds that we are the living temples

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there:
Then shall my heart from earth be free
When it has found repose in thee.

O hide this self from me, that I
No more, but Christ in me may live!
My vile affections crucify;
Let not one darling lust survive;
In all things may I nothing see,
Nothing desire or seek but thee.

David's Prayer.—*Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me.* Ps. xxxviii. 21.
Divine Answer.—*My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires,* &c. Isa. liv. 10–15.

SUCH as have never felt spiritual distress, cannot relish this word of promise; but they who have been brought out of great misery by this sweet word, or any other word of promise applied to their hearts by the Holy Ghost, will henceforth take hold of it and prize it; yea, they should firmly believe, even without a present feeling of its comfort, that God will certainly perform the promise he has once sealed upon them. He is a God that changeth not, and a God in covenant with his people, and his covenant is everlasting; therefore he will not forsake his people, but order all things for their good, and conduct them safely through their pilgrimage, though violent enemies assault them, and mighty tempests fall upon them. His faithfulness stands engaged for this.

Firm are the words his prophets give,
Sweet words on which believers live;
Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spoke and spread the skies abroad.
O! for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what th' Almighty saith;
T' embrace the message of his Son,
And call the joys of heaven our own.
Then should the earth's old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break;
Our steady souls should fear no more,
Than solid rocks when billows roar.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil. Prov. iii. 5–7. *Be not wise in your own conceits,* Rom. xii. 16; *for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.* 1 Cor. iii. 19. See also Isa. v. 21.

WHOEVER desires to know the will of the Lord, and prayeth earnestly for instruction, shall certainly know his will. But he must not be wise in his own conceit, nor lean to his own understanding, nor expect that the wisdom or learning of this world will explain the things of God. He must not seek to reconcile the word to his lusts, but combat his lusts by the word. In short, he must come to Jesus for instruction, with the same simplicity of mind as a child comes to learn its letters; and not come for a month or a year, but sit all his life at the feet of Jesus, to receive instruction from him. Lord, make me jealous of myself, enable me to go in and out with prayer, and keep me from all errors that may hurt my soul.

Thus saith the wisdom of the Lord,—
Bless'd is the man that hears my word;
Keeps daily watch before my gates,
And at my feet for mercy waits.

The soul that seeks me shall obtain
Immortal wealth and heavenly gain;
Immortal life is his reward,
Life and the favour of the Lord.

But the vile wretch that flies from me
Doth his own soul an injury;
Fools that against my grace rebel,
Seek death, and love the road to hell.

So we preach, and so ye believed. 1 Cor. xv. 11.

THE method of the Gospel is this: First, it proposeth things which are peculiarly its own. So the apostle sets down the constant entrance of his preaching. 1 Cor. xv. 3. It reveals its own mysteries, laying them as the foundation of faith and obedience; and it also inlays them in the mind, thereby conforming the whole soul unto them. Rom. vi. 17. Gal. iv. 19. Tit. ii. 11, 12. 1 Cor. iii. 11. 2 Cor. iii. 18. This foundation being laid, it then grafts all duties of moral obedience on the stock of faith in Christ Jesus. Where this foundation is not laid through ignorance, or rejected through prejudice, the Gospel has nothing to do with such men; it neither renews their souls, nor produces any genuine fruits of obedience. Thus the apostle Paul, in all his epistles, teaches first the mysteries of faith that are peculiar to the Gospel, and then descends unto those moral duties which are regulated thereby; so we must first hear the Gospel, and be acquainted with its discoveries, before we can believe aright; and when our faith is rightly founded, it is to show itself in the practice of all those good works that are required of us in the Scriptures. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Let all thy precepts good and right,
And laws which in thy word are found,
And the strong faith which gives these weight,
Be always in me and abound.

How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Gen. xxxix. 9.

JOSEPH was a slave, and in a strange country; he was tempted by a wanton and revengeful mistress; had he complied, he would have been sure of secrecy and rewards; but if he resisted he might expect her keenest resentment, if not the loss of his life. Yet all these could not influence him; he chooses to submit to every inconvenience and danger, rather than be guilty of so foul a crime, and sin against God. From hence we may learn that the fear of God is a most effectual preservative against all criminal indulgences. It was this that restrained Joseph, and will, where it is possessed, have the same effect on all mankind, upon all occasions, and in every scene of life. It strikes every passion, every spring of human action, and includes in it all the most powerful motives by which the conduct of mankind is determined. If interest be the principal thing that sways us, that surely cannot be so certainly promoted as by securing the favour of God, and avoiding his displeasure. If we are governed by our fears, he is the most formidable being in the universe to a mind that has perverted its faculties and transgressed the laws of its nature; if by hope, he is the supreme God; if by love, he is the most amiable and perfect Excellence; if by gratitude, he is the Author of all our happiness.

Give me, O Lord, such godly fear
As feels thy presence nigh;
And looks to thee when sin is near,
And makes the tempter fly.

I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. Because thy heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, &c. 2 Kings xxii. 8, 19.

THE priests, probably to save themselves the trouble of writing, and the people of reading the book at large, had furnished themselves with abstracts of the law, leaving out, or slightly mentioning, some parts thereof, and particularly the threatenings; which Josiah was so much affected with, as being new to him. The book of God's law seems in our day to be lost; a sealed book to most of the congregations that profess themselves Christians; imperfect accounts of it are given, which hide the promised blessings and threatened curses of God. When this book by spiritual light is found, and on reading or hearing thereof, conviction reaches the conscience, it is a great instance of God's favour, a token for good, and must be faithfully acknowledged as such. Reader, art thou truly apprehensive of the weight of God's wrath, and solicitous to obtain his favour? Seek then earnestly, upon thy knees, and in the house of the Lord, redemption from the curses of the law; pray that Jesus may be revealed to thee; the blood of the Lamb of God alone can take away the guilt of sin; having found the law, rest not till thou find the Gospel also, and its blessings. Josiah's heart was tender, he wept and arrive at a comfortable assurance of thine interest in was encouraged; follow his sorrow, and thou wilt partake of his blessings; and make the law of G- thy delight and counsellor.

Draw me, we will run after thee. The King hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee; we will remember thy love more than wine; the upright love thee. Song of Sol. i. 4. *In thee the fatherless findeth mercy.* Hosea xiv. 3. See also Ps. cii. 13.

THE needle's point in the seaman's compass never stands still, but quivers and shakes till it comes right against the north pole. The wise men of the East never rested till they were right against the star which appeared unto them: and the star itself never stood still till it came right against that other Star, which shone more brightly in the manger than the sun did in the firmament. And Noah's dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot all the while she was fluttering over the flood, till she returned to the ark with an olive branch in her mouth. So the heart of every true Christian, which is the turtle-dove of Jesus Christ, can find no rest all the while it is hovering over the waters of this world, till with the silver wings of a dove, and the olive branch of faith, it flies to Jesus, the true Noah and rest of our souls, who puts forth his hand out of the ark, and taking the dove in, receiveth it to himself.

Vain are the things of time,
 There's nought of pleasure here;
Even our most sunny clime
 Is dark, and wild, and drear;
God only is the refuge sure,
The source of pleasure full and pure.
In vain I seek for rest
 In all created good;
It leaves me still unblest,
 And makes me cry for God.
And sure at rest I cannot be,
Until my heart finds rest in thee.

What think ye of Christ? Matt. xxii. 42.

OUGHT we not to put this question to our souls, when our happiness for ever depends upon him, and when without him we are undone to eternity? How ought we then to think of the Lord Jesus Christ? Surely, as the scripture represents him to be, "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."—We ought to think of him in his person as the great God incarnate; in his work and his offices, as the Saviour of Israel. We ought to think of him as one, in whom justice is satisfied, love and righteousness are manifested, and sinners are saved. O how highly have God's people ever thought of Christ Jesus! and how exultingly do the saints now in heaven think of him! But what think we of Christ when burdened with sin, when oppressed with affliction? When we cannot entertain a good thought of ourselves, can we then think of Christ as highly as heretofore? Alas, how very weak is our faith at the best! Lord, strengthen our faith, inflame our love, enlarge our views, support us in trials, guide us by thy counsels, and receive us into glory, that we may sing thy praise to all eternity. Amen.

Now living waters flow
To cheer the humble soul;
From sea to sea the rivers go,
And spread from pole to pole.

Now righteousness shall spring,
And grow on earth again;
Jesus Jehovah be our king,
And o'er the nations reign.

Our conversation (or our citizenship) *is in heaven.* Phil. iii. 20. Therefore *rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* Luke x. 20. *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.* Col. iii. 2.

A CHRISTIAN being only a traveller through the world, must expect a traveller's fare—bad roads sometimes, bad weather, and bad accommodations; but since his journey's end and city are in heaven, all his actions, sufferings, prayers, trade and conversation turn that way. His actions, for whatsoever is bound on earth is bound in heaven; his sufferings, for those who overcome shall receive a crown of glory; his prayers, for grace is the answer to prayer; his trade, for whatsoever is of the world is sin; his conversation, for whatsoever is earthly is abomination, and worketh a lie. O Lord, grant that mine eyes may be always fixed upon this mark, so as to regulate all my doings accordingly, asking myself in everything, whether it be fit for heaven, and agreeable to the mind of the heavenly Bridegroom, and to the manners of the heavenly citizens.

Lord, bid my soul fly out and run
Through every heavenly street;
And say, There's nought below the sun
That's worthy of thy feet.

So shall we mount on sacred wings,
And tread the courts above:
Nor earth, nor all her mightiest things,
Shall tempt our meanest love.

The glorious tenants of the place
Stand bending round the throne;
And saints and seraphs sing and praise
The Infinite Three-One.

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts x. 43; and iv. 12.—*Thy name is as ointment poured forth* (the fulness of his grace). Song of Sol. i. 3. *It is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* Prov. xviii. 10.

IN this name we should draw nigh to the Father in prayer, and not approach him with a strange fire of our own, kindled from the fancied merit of devotion; and he will draw nigh to us again. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. James iv. 8. He will certainly grant our petitions, and we shall receive, that our joy may be full. John xvi. 24. For the Lord is good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon him (Ps. lxxxvi. 5); and all these promises are Yea and Amen in Christ; so that every believer may say, The Lord will receive my prayer. Ps. vi. 9. "Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me;" for "he hath dealt bountifully with me." Ps. lxvi. 20; and xiii. 6. Lord, may this be the language and the exercise of my heart, and do thou grant me to believe more firmly in thy name.

Lift up your eyes to th' heavenly seat
Where your Redeemer stays;
Kind Intercessor! there he sits,
And loves, and pleads, and prays.

Petitions now, and praise may rise,
And saints their offerings bring;
The Priest with his own sacrifice
Presents them to the King.

In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Ps. xvi. 11. *And I saw the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* Rev. xxi. 2–4, 10, 12.

O MY dear Saviour, look upon me in mercy. Thou seest what earthly desires and unmortified tempers are yet found in me; and though I cry unto thee daily, mine enemies still prevail over me. Yet thou art almighty to save, and hast promised to cast out none that come unto thee. Let me then experience the power of thy grace in raising me up to more newness of life, in stirring up prayer and strengthening faith, in creating hungerings after righteousness, and thirstings after God, and in bestowing a right heavenly mind upon me, that my soul may be as a bride prepared and adorned for her husband. Give me also a frequent taste below of those pleasures which are at thy right hand for evermore, that my heart may be kept waiting and eagerly looking for thy coming; and that united unto thee in faith, my life may be spent in thy favour and unto thy glory.

Oh, the delights, the heavenly joys,
The glories of the place,
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace.

Archangels sound his lofty praise
Through every heavenly street;
And lay their brightest honours down
Submissive at his feet.

Lord, how our souls are all on fire
To see thy blest abode;
Our tongues rejoice in tunes of praise
To our incarnate God.

SEPTEMBER 18.

Watch and pray: let us be going. Matt. xxvi. 41, 46. *Remember Lot's wife.* Luke xvii. 32. *This is the way, walk ye in it.* Isa. xxx. 21. *He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* Phil. i. 6.

TO be kept from self-righteousness on the one hand, and from false liberty on the other, is the right Christian way. O my dear Jesus, thou art the way! Teach me then to walk in thy strength, to live in thy faith, to gaze much upon thee, to cleave firmly unto thee, and abide ever in thee; so shall I experience the liberty of thy Gospel, which yieldeth no licence for sin, but bringeth joyful deliverance from its power; for when my heart resteth on thee, it cannot rest in the flesh, and seek to fulfil its lusts, but being delighted with thy beauty and glorious love, all other things vanish, and I am kept watchful, close, and fervent. I live a life of godly holiness hid with thee. Send forth the Spirit and prepare my heart thus to abide in thee, and to turn and bring me back when I turn to the right hand or to the left.

When my forgetful soul renews
The savour of thy grace,
My heart presumes I cannot lose
The relish all my days.

But ere one fleeting hour is past,
The flatt'ring world employs
Some sensual bait to seize my taste,
And to pollute my joys.

Then I repent, and vex my soul
That I should leave thee so;
Where will those wild affections roll,
That let a Saviour go?

Walk before me and be thou perfect. Gen. xvii. 1. *Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccles. xii. 13, 14. *I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof, in the day of judgment.* Matt. xii. 36.

CONSEQUENTLY all such things as are now called indifferent in their nature will also be brought to God's bar, and not be called indifferent there, but judged as actually good or actually evil. Oh the prodigious harm that is done by this false doctrine of innocent things! It opens the door to innumerable sins; for though our conscience often tells us that we should not do such things as are not actually good, yet presently innocence is pleaded, it is called a harmless thing; which though it could not be said to be good, yet it was not evil either, but quite indifferent in its nature; by which thousands are drawn into the snares of the devil. O Lord, grant that all my works may be done unto thee, and in thy presence agreeably to thy commandments; that even my leaves may not wither, and whatsoever I do may prosper and abide for ever, and that while here I may be fitted, by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, for the holy and blessed communion of heaven that is hereafter to those who keep thy law.

Within thy circling power I stand;
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John iii. 3. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* 2 Cor. v. 17. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,* &c. Titus iii. 5, 6. See also James i. 18, and 1 Peter i. 23.

CONSEQUENTLY no outward form of religion will do; but we must be renewed by the Spirit of God, and have our hearts changed, else we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Christ, by saying, Verily, verily, has confirmed this twice by an oath. How is it possible then that merely honest and moral men can be saved? Will Christ break his double oath? No, surely. Now, since outward gross vices only are blamed in conversation or preaching, a moral man slips through the law without censure; and the careless think they can leave off their open sins one time or another; and so none are duly concerned to be thoroughly converted; but the new birth and a real change of the heart being insisted upon, and Christ held forth in this only true way, every one who will be saved must be turned.

The second Adam shall restore
 The ruins of the first;
Hosannah to that sov'reign power
 That new-creates our dust.

When from the curse he sets us free,
 He makes our natures clean;
Nor would our Saviour come to be
 The minister of sin.

rt thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou dis-ted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise who is the health of my countenance and my God. Ps. 11. *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be aled in us.* Rom. viii. 18.

LIEVERS, we are here assured, may be in great distress; but though much perplexed, and often ıraged, they are secretly held up by faith, and ht off conquerors. If God had commanded us to and hope only till a certain time mentioned, and lp had failed to come within that time, we might despair. But since he requires us to hope even to ıd or last moment of life, this should keep us from ience and despair: for though he should tarry to the end, believers will certainly experience hen to be faithful to his promise. He may try ıith and patience to the utmost, but he cannot his own word. Dear Lord, whatever load thou leased to lay upon me, enable me to wait in and prayer till the joyful hour of deliverance; knowing that thou layest on no burden dispro-ɔned to the grace thou art giving.

'Tis God that lifts our comforts high,
Or sinks them in the grave;
He gives, and blessed be his name!
He takes but what he gave.
Peace, all our angry passions then!
Let each rebellious sigh
Be silent at his sov'reign will,
And every murmur die.
If smiling mercy crown our lives,
Its praises shall be spread;
And we'll adore the justice, too,
That strikes our comforts dead.

Be not soon shaken in mind. 2 Thess. ii. 2. *I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* 1 Cor. ii. 2. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Col. ii. 3. *But we preach Christ crucified. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.* 1 Cor. i. 6, 23.

O MY dear Saviour, enable me to rest humbly and quietly in thee, avoiding all such novelties as might breed presumption, distract my thoughts, and cause my heart to swerve from thee. Whoever has tasted the sweetness of thy word will be satisfied with it; and better it is to improve in the life of faith, and power of godliness, than in new words, forms, and professions. May the Lord quicken me by the old truths, and humble my heart evermore, so as to receive them better, and to abide in that which I have heard from the beginning. Novelty is the bane of souls, by which we are often grievously tormented and distracted. It is work enough for a meek and quiet soul to keep within the bounds of a settled mind, and effectually to centre in God. How can such enjoy true rest, who, from a vain curiosity to know everything, are ever running after new doctrines, or prying into every man's business?—Lord, save me from this unsettled mind, and make me determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, and to have his testimony confirmed in my heart. Amen.

O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!

David's Prayer.—*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.* Ps. li. 2.
Divine Answer.—*The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.* 1 John i. 7. See also 1 Cor. vi. 11.

UNDER the ceremonial law all things were purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there was no remission: thus it is impossible that any one sin, even the least sinful motion, should be taken away, except by the blood of Jesus Christ. May this teach me the heinousness of sin in the sight of the great Jehovah, and may it tend to keep my heart humble and my conscience tender; for how dreadful must the stain of sin be, since nothing but the blood of Christ can wash it out. Blessed be God for opening this fountain, and keeping it open, day and night, for the vilest sinners to wash in. May my polluted soul be daily washed in this fountain, and receive both peace and strength from it, and arrayed in the robes of Christ's righteousness, may I be prevented from doing anything dishonourable to his name.

My dying Saviour and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin,
Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
And cleanse and keep me clean.

Wash me, and make me thus thy own,
Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone—
My hands, my head, my heart.

Th' atonement of thy blood apply,
Till faith to sight improve;
Till hope shall in fruition die,
And all my soul be love.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith. 2 Cor
See also 1 Cor. xi. 28.

BUT is there any need of such self-examir
when yet we preach Christ, and stay ou
on his name? Alas! it is possible both to prea
profess him, yea, to have a seeming confidence i
and call him our Rock, and talk of his grace, a
be lovers of sin, and haters of holiness; and t
show we have no interest in him, but are in th
to destruction. Thus Jesus hath told us, Ma
22, 23. Let us examine ourselves. Is our f
him accompanied with much self-abhorrence,
view of our sinfulness and pollution before him
we prize him, not only for his favour to us, but
own goodness, his grace, and his excellence?
love him so as to love nothing in comparison of
neither self, nor the world, nor our ease nor
tage? Then surely we are his, and he also i
These graces are the fruits of his Spirit with
they are proofs of our faith, and of our unio
him; and if we are united by the Spirit to Je
will certainly own us before men and angels;
never forsake us in time or eternity. But how
ful will their case be who deceive themselves he
habitually give themselves unto sin and in
whilst yet they make mention of Jesus Chris
their lips! Keep us, Lord, we beseech thee
such sad delusion! O give us to remember
past provocations, and to know, to love, and
thee in sincerity!

t lack I yet? Matt. xix. 20. *Yet lackest thou one thing.* ıke xviii. 22. *For one thing is needful.* Luke x. 42.

HIS one thing needful is to have Christ; but he must first serve and treat us with his grace ıre we can draw strength from him to serve him n. We must be taught to see him our food, and unger for him, before we can feed upon him, or ıything for him. And as Christ is the author of ı, he gives it increase out of his fulness; and faith, g somewhat strengthened, begins to work for him, ıgh it be but faintly. However, we become istians, and remain in a perfect state of salvation, by what faith works, but by what it receives; for ıgh a feeble faith will perform feeble works, it can ive a whole and perfect Christ; which is the one g needful. Grant, dear Lord, that I may possess one thing needful, that he may dwell in my heart, ing and grounding me in love.

O may I never want the seal
Of Christ my dying soul to heal;
He is my sure defence;
The one thing needful I must get,
Ere death's dark clouds around me set,
And my freed soul fly hence.

I'll hear of nothing else beside
My Jesus, and him crucified;
In him is all I want:
His blood, his meritorious blood,
Alone is rich, alone is good;
For that alone I pant.

Joseph is a fruitful bough; the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel. Gen. xlix. 22–24.

JOSEPH is an eminent type of the Messiah: let us trace the resemblance. Joseph was in a peculiar manner beloved by his father; Christ is the dear Son of his Father's love. Jacob made for Joseph a coat of many colours; God prepared a body in human nature for Christ, filled and adorned with the various gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure. Joseph was hated by his brethren, and they could not endure to think he should have the dominion over them; the Jews, Christ's brethren according to the flesh, hated him, and would not have him to reign over them. Joseph was sent by his father a long journey to visit his brethren, and know their welfare; Christ was sent from the bosom of the Father, to seek and to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Joseph's brethren conspired to take away his life; the Jews said, "This is the heir, let us kill him;" and they consulted to take away his life. Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver at the motion of Judah; and Christ, by one of the same name, was sold for thirty pieces. Joseph was delivered to strangers, and Christ to the Gentiles. Joseph being reckoned dead by his father, and yet alive, may be an emblem of Christ's death and resurrection from the dead.

O Jesus! I in Joseph see
How archers shot and grieved thee;
Into the grave like Joseph cast,
And raised, like him, a Prince at last.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him (as my righteousness). Phil. iii. 7–9.

THIS was the life and constant mind of St. Paul. The words "In Him," "in Christ," "in the Lord," "I am Christ's," &c., occur in his epistles continually. I choose them also for my staff, and my song in the wilderness; they shall be my great tower, my strong fortress, my sweet paradise, mine only element and life. Here may I take up mine abode for ever, and the Lord keep me steadfast! "It is good for us to be here;" for this is Pisgah, the mount of the Lord, where Jesus, being transfigured, reveals his glory to his disciples. Here we should build our tabernacle; and here may death find me at last. Help me, O thou Spirit of the Lord, to be a true believer in Christ Jesus, "not having mine own righteousness," nor trusting to anything that I have done or am able to do; but may I, casting away as worthless all that the world calls excellent, cleave to Christ and be found in him. O may I be able to make Christ my resting-place and my refuge at all times.

Had I ten thousand gifts beside,
I'd cleave to Jesus crucified,
And build on him alone;
For no foundation is there given
On which I'd place my hopes of heaven,
But Christ the corner-stone.

The Penitent's Prayer.—*What must I do to be saved?* Acts xvi. 30.
Divine Answer.—*Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Acts xvi. 31.

FAITH is not a confidence of our own making, but it is God that works it in a broken and repenting heart. This faith purifies the heart, crucifies the old Adam, overcomes the world, changes us in heart, mind, and all the powers and faculties of the soul, which is the true Protestant faith; and not that we only think and say, "I believe." By this we must try our faith. All true believers have received it, under a sense of godly sorrow, and with brokenness of heart. If we feel something of this, and apply to Christ by prayer for faith and grace, we have a sure mark of faith already; for if we did not believe, we would not pray. And he that daily applies to the blood of Christ for cleansing, has true faith and hope already, though he is but weak, and does not taste any joy. The Lord grant to all our souls that repentance unto life, and that faith in Jesus Christ, which are the saving graces of the Spirit, that in due time, when the end is come, we may receive a crown of glory to wear for ever in the presence of the Prince of Life, and of God himself.

Ye dying souls, that sit
In darkness and distress,
Look from the borders of the pit
To Christ's recovering grace.

Sinners shall hear his sound;
Their thankful tongues shall own,
Their righteousness and strength is found
In Christ the Lord alone.

Abstain from all appearance of evil. 1 Thess. v. 22. *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.* Phil. ii. 15. See also Eph. v. 8.

BE as the sun in the firmament; he giveth light to all; so let your light shine before all men. By doing so, some may walk in it, and God will be glorified. Be no slaves to the flesh, but, on the contrary, show a willing and holy service to the most high God! Bless those that are against you. Lord, I desire to shine in good works, the genuine fruits of faith; therefore will I give myself up to thee, to purge me, that I may bring forth more fruit. Looking upon myself as thine, I would not only abstain from evil, but from the very appearance of it. Some are satisfied with knowing they are blameless, and care not what others think of them; but for the Gospel's sake I desire to appear blameless before others, lest some offence should come through me: which, as far as in me lieth, I would prevent. Thy children, O God, are as lights in the world. O pour thy grace, that heavenly oil, into my lamp, and so trim it that it may give light unto all around, that they may be led to glorify thy holy name.

O Lord, my stubborn will subdue;
Create my ruined frame anew!
Dispel my darkness by thy light;
Into all truth my spirit guide,
But from mine eyes for ever hide
All things displeasing in thy sight.

Let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

IF there be a sense of sin, and want of spiritual blessings, and a willingness to be saved by grace, though you know not that it is Christ's secret power that makes you willing, yet being athirst and willing, you are invited: do not puzzle and perplex yourselves with such questions as these: Am I elected? Have I a right? Am I prepared? but come upon the invitation, and take pardon, peace, righteousness, and every Gospel blessing, as free gifts to the needy. If one ready to perish with hunger and thirst were invited to a feast and assured of welcome, and he should stand hesitating, Have I a right? am I worthy? would it not seem preposterous in him thus to demur, when his necessities were pressing upon him, and a plentiful table before him? The weary, the hungry, the thirsty, the guilty, the worthless, the vilest, are invited to believe in Jesus, who came only to save sinners, and hath assured them in his word, that those who thus come to him, "he will in nowise cast out."

The Spirit in the word
And in his motions cries,
"Come to the Fountain-head of life,
And come for large supplies.
Let him who feels his thirst,
Nor can endure its rage,
Come to salvation's copious springs,
And all his pains assuage.
And whosoever will,
Is welcome to receive
The streams of everlasting life,
That heaven will freely give."

Weep not; behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has prevailed. Rev. v. 5. *The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* 1 John 3, 8. *Sin shall not have dominion over you.* Rom. vi. 14. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Rom. viii. 2.

MANY complain that, though they will not turn back, yet they have no power to advance farther. If this should be thy case, my reader, remember that the enemy of souls will discourage thee. Go on praying, and venture it evermore upon the Lord. Consider how he awakened you at first, how often he has heard your prayers afterwards, and assisted you in many hard struggles. Surely he will help you now also. If that will not do, begin, as it were, afresh; acknowledge yourself guilty in every respect; and, as the chief of sinners, plead for mercy, and be instant in your humble supplications; looking at the same time upon God as a reconciled Father through Christ, who is willing to receive you, pardon, and bless you, in spite of all your misery: then you will soon make a better progress. To despair of our own strength is good; but we must never despair of the power of Christ, who is risen from the dead, but be sure to overcome with him at last. He will certainly help you in the due and best season.

Hell and thy sins resist thy course,
But hell and sin are vanquished foes!
Thy Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose.
He dies, and in that dreadful night
Did all the powers of death destroy;
Rising, he brought our heaven to light,
And took possession of the joy.

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth ev whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the chasteneth not? He chasteneth us for our profit. H 6–10.

TO these chastenings belong outward affli which are precious means, and sanctif believers. And this is a clear proof that we receive such chastenings with gladness, and th should not repine under them. They eviden fatherly care and love of God, and are desig try our faith, and purge our souls from the matter of earth that is mixed up with them from them we must learn that chastisements the means of good to us, if we use them arig my dear heavenly Father, thou art only please a true child-like confidence; but I am still of trusting heart, when anything comes upon m sudden. Help me always to entertain the h thoughts of thee, and to fear no adversity; l on it as a token of love and not of hatred, and believing it to be intended as a blessing for my Whatever thy providence may order, let me o convinced of thy fatherly affection, and fall i thy wholesome and loving designs.

Though for my sin I justly feel
Thy discipline, O God,
I wait thy gracious moment still,
Till thou remove thy rod.

For I have found 'tis good for me
To bear my Father's rod:
Afflictions make me learn thy law,
And live upon my God.

ntrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understand-unto the simple. Ps. cxix. 130. *Order my steps in thy rd; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.* Ver. . *The Scriptures testify of me* (Christ). John v. 39.

E may have a clear sight and a real taste of the Gospel, and yet be soon deprived of the com- of it again, if we do not walk in godly simplicity poverty of spirit; for Christ will have none but ble and child-like disciples. But if we abide in st, by a close and humble walk with him, we come to a great and lasting assurance; for ier a sweet sense of Christ, nor even faith in Christ, is the ground of our salvation; but st alone received into the heart as the Saviour. h does not save, but enables us to receive the our, and with him salvation. Neither does a t sense of Christ save us; it only shows the our is present with us. Now, the weakest true ver does receive Christ as well as the strongest, gh he reap no present comfort from his faith. must first believe, before we can feel, and be kful for our feelings, but not trust in them.

Thy mercies fill the earth, O Lord;
How good thy works appear!
Open mine eyes to read thy word,
And see thy wonders there.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad;
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God.

'Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,
That guides us all the day;
And through the dangers of the night,
A lamp to lead our way.

Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken me in thy way. Ps. cxix. 37.

IF you were to see a man endeavouring all his to satisfy his thirst, by holding up one and same empty cup to his mouth, you would certa despise his ignorance; but if you should see ot ridiculing the dull satisfaction of one cup, and th ing to satisfy their own thirst by a variety of and golden empty cups, would you think that t were ever the wiser or happier, or better emplo for their finer parts? Now this is all the differ that you can see in the happiness of this life. dull and heavy soul may be content with one en appearance of happiness, and be continually tryin hold one and the same empty cup to his mouth his life. But then let the talented men of the w lay all their heads together, and they can only s you more, and various empty appearances of ha ness; give them all the world into their hands, can only make a great variety of empty cups; search as deep as you will, there is nothing tc found here nobler or greater than eating and drink rich dress and applause, unless you look for it in wisdom and laws of religion. Reader, reflect u the vanity of all orders of life who live without g ness, and see how all the ways of the world are so many different ways of error and blindness, you may be earnest at a throne of grace to be tu from the creature, and seek for happiness in Creator.

David's Prayer.—*Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication.* Ps. lv. 1.
Christ's Answer.—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* John xvi. 23. *For the Father himself loveth you.* Ver. 27. *Before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear.* Isa. lxv. 24. *Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* Mark xi. 24.

HE that converses much with God in prayer, and has some child-like confidence in his word, shall certainly be heard; and these answers of prayer are undeniable evidences of the truth, the faithfulness, and the love of God, and greatly strengthen his faith; and at last bring him to be intimately acquainted with God. The more we receive, the more we are enlightened to see how much there is still wanting. This stirs us up to more frequent prayer, and to more fervent desires; and the more we desire and believe that we shall receive it, the more shall be granted. Unbelief receives nothing (Matt. xiii. 58); but faith opens all the treasures of God, and never goes away empty.

Because on me they set their love,
I'll save them, saith the Lord;
I'll bear their joyful souls above
Destruction and the sword.

In me they every grace shall find
For sorrow, joy, or care;
Their broken hearts I will upbind,
Unloose their every snare.

My grace shall answer when they call;
In trouble I'll be nigh;
My power shall help them when they fall,
And raise them when they die.

If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. Gal. i. 10. *Let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification.* Rom. xv. 2. Fear or love of men, and hypocrisy, very often are nearly allied: *A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.* Prov. xxix. 5. *But he that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.* Chap. xxviii. 23.

WE are ever inclined to extremes, even then when God has begun his work in our soul. At one time we are apt to run into a false activity for the conversion of others, trusting too much to our own sufficiency and strength; at other times, perhaps, we fall into too much remissness and inactivity for the salvation of others. May the Lord therefore always guide me to steer the middle course, so as to walk in all singleness and humility of heart, as well as in true fervency of spirit, faith, and love, that it may be said, "I believe, therefore do I speak." Grant, O my dear Saviour, that I may shine as a light, and be useful to all about me; never seeking my own, but only the salvation and good of others, with unfeigned love! O that thy love may constrain me in all things! Amen.

My own glory still I seek,
 Still I covet human praise:
Still, in all I do or speak,
 Thee I wrong, and rob thy grace.

And must that which is so good,
 Evil prove to sinful me?
Poison shall I draw from food,
 Sin from grace and pride from thee?

Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 1 John iii. 19. *Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.* John xviii. 37.

THE evidence of our assurance of eternal happiness is that which every soul, that makes any serious reflections on matters of religion, pants after: it is therefore necessary to know upon what foundation this blessed evidence is built, and from what principles it arises; and those, I think, are chiefly faith, love, and obedience; since no man can have this assurance who does not feel in himself the principle of obedience, nor can he have obedience without the principle of love; nor love without the principle of faith; for it is a notorious contradiction to imagine that any one can be assured of God Almighty's pardon, without obeying him; of his favour, without loving him; or of the eternal enjoyment of him, without a firm and steadfast belief in him. But here many mistake the nature of these things. True belief in God represents him to the mind as infinite in glory, and power, and wisdom, and goodness, and in all perfections; with such charms, such beauty, such loveliness, as to captivate and ravish the affections of the soul, and smite it with a divine love. True love reigns triumphant in the soul, engrosses all its affections, strips other objects of their charms; nay, makes them appear vile and contemptible, in comparison with the supreme good. True obedience strives to please God, to resemble him, to render itself acceptable to him, and ardently desires the enjoyment of him.

He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Matt. xxiv. 13. *Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* Rev. iii. 11. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* 1 Cor. x. 12.

HE that stands in faith, and by nature is of a cheerful temper, must not magnify the measure of his own faith, nor undervalue that of weaker souls, for such conduct would declare that he is even now fallen into pride and a contempt of his brother; therefore, however fast we may seem to stand, let us be wary and watchful. We are never so near a fall as when we grow self-confident. He who knows the nature and power of temptations, will not discourage the weak, nor insist too much upon particular enjoyments and sensible assurances, which are not the constant witness and marks of faith. The Holy Spirit himself is the earnest and seal of adoption; who is to be known, not only by this joy, but by all his other fruits and operations. To trust too much upon feeling, disturbs our peace as soon as it is gone; but to rely on the word of God preserves a settled assurance.

Jesus, shall I never be
Firmly grounded upon thee?
Strong in faith I seem this hour;
Stript the next of all my power.

Plant, and root, and fix in me,
All the mind that was in thee;
Settled peace I then shall find,
When I am renewed in mind.

If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Rom. viii. 9, 14. See also ver. 7, 8.

NOT gross wickedness only, but even a carnal mind, is enmity against God. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James iv. 4. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." Phil. iii. 18, 19. But how do I know that I have the spirit of Christ?

Answer.—I have prayed for him earnestly; this cannot be in vain. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 13. He works also hatred and sorrow of sin; rebukes me, comforts me, and drives me to Christ and to prayer. This is his abiding witness, built upon the word of God, which no man of this world can have, but even the weakest believer enjoys.

Holy, true and righteous Lord,
I seek to know and do thy will;
Be mindful of thy gracious word,
And stamp me with thy Spirit's seal.

My conscience purge from every blot,
My idols all be cast aside;
Rebuke each vain and sinful thought,
And crucify both self and pride.

Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have [illegible] *abundance.* Matt. xiii. 12. *For the water that I shall* [illegible] *him shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto* [illegible] *lasting life.* John iv. 14. *He that is righteous, let hi* [illegible] *righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy* [illegible] Rev. xxii. 11.

OF the remarkable increase of the kingdom of G even from the least beginning, see also Matt. : 31–33; and that beautiful figure, Ezek. xlvii. 12. This well being opened, it highly concerns u draw living water out of it daily by fervent pra and then it will spring up freely. But, reader you begin to be slothful, and distracted with wor cares, not abiding closely with Christ, nor cal diligently on him, your spirit will soon be dried and you will scarcely be able, with anxious groans draw a single drop from this well. Therefore, t heed to your spirit, and if you desire your own c fort and God's glory, keep near the well's mouth, be drawing its water continually by prayer, and dri ing it sweetly by faith.

Glory to God that walks the sky,
And sends his blessings through;
That tells his saints of joy on high,
And gives a taste below.

Cheerful I feast on heavenly fruit,
And drink the pleasures down,
Pleasures that flow hard by the foot
Of the eternal throne.

But ah! how soon my joys decay
How soon my sins arise,
And snatch the heavenly scene away
From these lamenting eyes?

Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, &c.
Matt. xxv. 30. Read the whole of the parable.

LOOK at this man to whom his Lord hath given one talent; he could not bear the thought of using his talent according to the will of him from whom he had it, and therefore he chose to make himself happier in a way of his own. "Lord," said he, "I knew thee, that thou wast a hard man," &c. But his Lord, having convicted him out of his own mouth, despatched him with this sentence, "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness," &c. Here you see how happy this man made himself, by not acting wholly according to his lord's will. It was, according to his own account, a happiness of murmuring and discontent; "I knew thee," says he, "that thou wast a hard man;" it was a happiness of fears and apprehensions; "I was," says he, "afraid;" it was a happiness of vain labours and fruitless travail; "I went," said he, "and hid thy talent;" and after having been awhile the sport of foolish passions and fears, he is rewarded with darkness, eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Look at the man with his five talents:—"Lord, thou gavest me five talents," &c. Here you see a man intent on improving his talents; he hath no uneasy passions, murmurings, vain fears, and fruitless labours, like the other, but his work prospers in his hands; his happiness increases upon him, the blessing of five becomes doubled; and he is received with a "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

the Spirit of the Lord Jesus
and pull down, and to establish everything acc
to his own wisdom, self-interest, or ambition, i
of humbly following the truth as it is in Jesus.
will never becomes a Christian, and much less
ing those who differ from us. The Lord was
the strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in th
but in the still small voice. 1 Kings xix. 1
He that taketh offence at everything that differ
him, shows great weakness. It is written, "I
it not." Isa. lxv. 8. Though the grape be
there is wine in the cluster. All spiritual e
are good; brotherly love renders them beauti
lovely. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ l
love to him, holy joy in his salvation, and
and peaceable temper, with long-suffering, an
ness towards the weakness and infirmitie
around us. The fruit of the Spirit is real
heart and life, a steadfast faith in a precio
gentleness, temper

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John xiii. 35. *And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul.* Acts iv. 32.

"GOD is Love; and every one that loveth is born of God;" if we love one another as brethren in Christ, and love all saints as saints, not because they are of this or that party, and if we love not in word only but in deed, and show the truth of our love by works and labours of love,—this is a solid proof to ourselves and to others that we are real disciples of Jesus. It is a clear testimony that we have truly learned Christ, and that we have his Spirit and his love shed abroad in our hearts; that we are of the family and household of faith, and shall enjoy all the family privileges. This is a better evidence, and more convincing to all around us of what we are, than all knowledge, gifts, attainments, and outward privileges whatever. O God of love, cause me to love thee, and all thine; the poor, the weak, and the feeble, as well as the strong; for all are thine!

Let party names no more
The Christian world o'erspread;
Gentile and Jew, and bond and free,
Are one in Christ their Head.

Among the saints on earth
Let mutual love be found;
Heirs of the same inheritance,
With mutual blessings crowned.

Let envy and ill-will
Be banished far away;
Those should in strictest friendship dwell,
Who the same Lord obey.

Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Matt. xxiv. 42.

TO watch is the wise exercise of a gracious soul, who is sensible of his own weakness, loves his Saviour, and fears to grieve the Spirit; who is well acquainted with the depth of corruption in his fallen nature, is well apprized of the invisible powers of darkness, and hearkens to the voice of his kind and adorable Shepherd. This watchfulness discovers an awakened attention to our spiritual concerns, and has the love of Christ for its motive, and is attended with a constant dependence on Christ for protection from dangers, and for strength against all enemies, together with supplies of grace in every time of need. If our religion be only in outward profession, it may pass without watching; but if it be true grace in the heart from Jesus Christ, that sacred treasure will need to be guarded by circumspect watchfulness. The exhortation is to all God's children, necessary in every condition, in every stage of a Christian's life; in youth, manhood, old age, in prosperity and adversity, in the seasons of consolation, and in the times of temptation; in company and alone. O blessed Jesus, help me to watch and pray; let me be always ready; keep me in thy love, and preserve me by thy power, till my change shall come.

Lord, help me to watch,
And help me to pray;
For foes lie at catch
By night and by day.

d's Prayer.—*As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so teth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for d, for the living God.* Ps. xlii. 1, 2.
ie Answer.—*Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the ters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money and without ce. Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.* Isa. 1, 2.

HERE is a great difference between a legal and a faint-hearted soul; the former is puffed up self-righteousness; the latter humbly thirsts after ist's righteousness; therefore he is not under the but has grace already. It is only the child, or new man actually born, that can cry and thirst. though he cannot so fully believe it, yet to have e is one thing, and to feel and enjoy it is another. refore let not the weak be confounded, which is e very easily, the enemy himself contributing to it nuch as he can; but let it be declared, even to weakest, that they have saving grace when they brought to be earnestly panting and made truly ing to receive all without price. Matt. v. 3.

Eternal wisdom has prepared
A soul-reviving feast,
And bids our longing appetites
The rich provision taste.
Jesus the God invites us here,
To this triumphal feast,
And brings immortal blessings down
For each redeemèd guest.
O! glorious God, what can we pay
For favours so divine?
We would devote our hearts alway
To be for ever thine.

David's Prayer.—*How long shall I take counsel in my having sorrow in my heart daily?* Ps. xiii. 2.

Divine Answer.—*Be careful for nothing; but in every by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let requests be made known unto God.* Phil. iv. 6. *Commu way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall br to pass.* Ps. xxxvii. 5. *For thou hast done wonderful th thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.* Isa. xx

"BE careful for nothing," is a wall against a t sand troubles. But if we give room to care and unbelief, it is like a leaven that spr through all our actions. Therefore we ought nev despair in our lawful calling, but rely in all thing the good providence and faithfulness of God, fi believing that he will never fail to carry us thr the most difficult and intricate circumstances, th there should be ever so little appearance of it in own eyes. But, alas! Lord, how often do our h misgive us, and we either murmur at thy provid or trust to ourselves; how seldom have we cas our care upon thee, and, in humble faith, implore direction! O help us to commit our way unto th

He that can dash whole worlds to death
And make them when he please,
He speaks, and that Almighty breath
Fulfils his great decrees.

His very word of grace is strong,
As that which built the skies;
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.

He said, "Let the wide heaven be spread;"
And heaven was stretched abroad:
"Abram, I'll be thy God," he said;
And he was Abram's God.

It is done. Revelation xxi. 6.

HEN Jesus bowed the head, and gave up the ghost, he said, "It is finished." The work of dience and suffering, which he had undertaken, s finished. When all the redeemed are gathered, who sitteth on the throne, beholding those he pur- sed with his blood, thus expresseth himself, "It lone." The means and helps appointed for train- you up and preparing you for glory, are now laid le. "That which is perfect is come, and that ich was in part is done away." What depth of dom, what order in the plan of salvation, and in tendency of its various parts to perfect the rious work of redeeming love, agreeably to the rnal counsel of peace! Rom. viii. 29, 30. This is doing of the Lord, and is it not marvellous in our s? When receiving the Spirit that is of God, do ot see and admire my dear Immanuel in the whole the plan; in him the beginning and finishing of s grand design? Am I part of the plan? is not eye upon me, his hand about me? O amazing dom and love! shall no part be neglected? can hing fail in the Redeemer's hand? shall even the akest be supported? shall none be lost?—shall all have eternal life? Why then should I fear? The ghty One will do all his work in me and for me. the prospect by faith of this finished work pleasant l transporting? What must the immediate blessed ion be! O my God, keep me by thy power to rlasting salvation.

We must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22. *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* Heb. xii. 1. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.* Ver. 4.

SOME licentious professors think there is no need to strive against sin; and some would seem so holy as to be above it; but here we are plainly told of a striving against it. What St. Paul speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, is to the same purpose. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. v. 17. The most experienced Christians are witnesses to it. The word of God is said to be a sword, our prayers the wrestling, and our faith the victory. Thus our whole race consists in strivings and conquests. There is always an enemy to be conquered first, before we can make a considerable progress in anything that is good; and none of our enemies are very easily to be overcome; but some are very stubborn; therefore courage and patience are required: and thus we may be sure to have the victory at last.

In Jesu's strength seek, O my soul,
Thy glorious warfare to pursue;
He only can thy sins control,
And give the vict'ries ever new.

The land of triumph lies on high,
There are no fields of battle there;
Lord, make me conquer till I die,
And finish well the glorious war.

We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Rom. iii. 24, 25. See also John iii. 16.

HOW sweet are the words "By grace (without merit) ye are saved." Here is an overflowing fountain of comfort and divine strength. But how little are the generality of vain and worldly people, who still feed upon husks, acquainted with these words. How little are they relished by self-righteous and merely moral Christians. But O! how deliciously does a poor hungering sinner fare upon them! There is hardly anything less known and understood, as to the power and experience, than the mystery of Christ's suffering and dying for us, and justification by faith in him; though it is the only paradise and element of believers, and the greatest jewel restored by the Reformation. Such talking and representations of sin as only strike the imagination, are not sufficient; but we must also feel the mortal wounds of sin, by which the flesh is mortified, and be actually healed by the stripes of Christ.

God, the great God, that rules the skies,
The gracious and the just,
Makes his own Son a sacrifice,
And here lies all our trust.

Here rest my faith, and ne'er remove:
Here let repentance rise,
While I behold his bleeding love,
His dying agonies.

See that ye fall not out by the way. Gen. xlv. 24.

JOSEPH, having shown himself fully reconciled to his brethren, dismisses them with this needful caution, "See that ye fall not out by the way." He knew that they were but too apt to be quarrelsome. One might say, "It was you that first upbraided him with his dreams;" another, "It was you that said, Let us kill him;" &c. Thus their journey to their father's house would be very uncomfortable, if this spirit of quarrelling and upbraiding once got possession of them. Fellow-Christians, what a lesson is here for us! what says our Lord Jesus to us? Love one another, live in peace: whatever occurs, let us not fall out by the way. Are we not all brethren? Have we not all one Father? Are we not all subjects of free and sovereign grace? Are we not all agreed in essential points? Are we not all sinners by nature and practice? Have we not all one object of faith? Are we not all travelling the same road? O then, why should we fall out by the way? Suppose we be of different denominations, yet holding the same Head, why cannot we love as brethren? Let not the strong despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong Suppose our way should part a little as to externals yet all setting out from the same spiritual Egypt, s under the same Leader, why may we not all hope meet at last in the true Canaan? Satan, false p fessors, and the ungodly world, are unanimous in t opposition to us: let us be united, that they pre *not* against us. Phil. ii. 1, 2.

The Sinner's Prayer.—*Where shall I find rest?*
Divine Answer.—*Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way: and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls.* Jer. vi. 16. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Matt. xi. 28–30.

IN our own ways there is nothing but trouble; but giving ourselves entirely up to be guided by God at his own pleasure, we may always be easy, since we know that by every step he brings us nearer to heaven. The only way to rest is the way of repentance and faith; in which we consider ourselves from the beginning, even to the end of our Christian life, as utterly lost and condemned by the law, but as perfectly reconciled and justified through Christ. Thus to abide in him, to let him work alone, and be truly resigned to his ways, will certainly have the desired effect; whilst, by the righteousness and workings of our own hearts, we can never attain to it, and, which is worse, may be lulled into a false rest.

Lord, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known,
A rest, where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art loved alone.

A rest, where all our soul's desire
Is fixed on things above;
Where grief, and pain, and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

This is the feast of saints on high,
But I may taste below;
And sweeter tastes God will supply,
As into Christ I grow.

Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. Matt. xiii. 12. *For the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.* John iv. 14. *He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.* Rev. xxii. 11.

OF the remarkable increase of the kingdom of God, even from the least beginning, see also Matt. xiii. 31–33; and that beautiful figure, Ezek. xlvii. 1–12. This well being opened, it highly concerns us to draw living water out of it daily by fervent prayer, and then it will spring up freely. But, reader, if you begin to be slothful, and distracted with worldly cares, not abiding closely with Christ, nor calling diligently on him, your spirit will soon be dried up, and you will scarcely be able, with anxious groans, to draw a single drop from this well. Therefore, take heed to your spirit, and if you desire your own comfort and God's glory, keep near the well's mouth, and be drawing its water continually by prayer, and drinking it sweetly by faith.

Glory to God that walks the sky,
And sends his blessings through;
That tells his saints of joy on high,
And gives a taste below.

Cheerful I feast on heavenly fruit,
And drink the pleasures down,
Pleasures that flow hard by the foot
Of the eternal throne.

But ah! how soon my joys decay
How soon my sins arise,
And snatch the heavenly scene away
From these lamenting eyes?

Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, &c.
Matt. xxv. 30. Read the whole of the parable.

LOOK at this man to whom his Lord hath given one talent; he could not bear the thought of using his talent according to the will of him from whom he had it, and therefore he chose to make himself happier in a way of his own. "Lord," said he, "I knew thee, that thou wast a hard man," &c. But his Lord, having convicted him out of his own mouth, despatched him with this sentence, "Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness," &c. Here you see how happy this man made himself, by not acting wholly according to his lord's will. It was, according to his own account, a happiness of murmuring and discontent; "I knew thee," says he, "that thou wast a hard man;" it was a happiness of fears and apprehensions; "I was," says he, "afraid;" it was a happiness of vain labours and fruitless travail; "I went," said he, "and hid thy talent;" and after having been awhile the sport of foolish passions and fears, he is rewarded with darkness, eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Look at the man with his five talents:—"Lord, thou gavest me five talents," &c. Here you see a man intent on improving his talents; he hath no uneasy passions, murmurings, vain fears, and fruitless labours, like the other, but his work prospers in his hands; his happiness increases upon him, the blessing of five becomes doubled; and he is received with a "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb, Hebron for an inheritance. Joshua xiv. 13.

THE spies that went up to view the promised land, all except Caleb and Joshua, made a formidable report of the gigantic inhabitants of Hebron, saying, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." Caleb (answering well to his name, which signifies all-heart) stilled the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome." We are told he had another spirit with him, and followed God fully. Moses, therefore, was commissioned to make him a grant of all the land whereon his feet had trodden, which was the mountain of Hebron. Caleb was eighty-five years old when he reminded Joshua of his promise; he was forty when Moses sent him to spy out the land; thirty-eight years the Lord had kept him in the wilderness, and seven years in Canaan amid the perils of war. Joshua blessed him, acknowledged his claim and deserts, besought God to prosper him, and give him the country; thus was his fidelity and uprightness rewarded. Reader, are you like-hearted with Caleb? Are you longing after Hebron; that is, communion with God? Are you eager to fight against your spiritual foes, those sons of Anak, lusts, passions, the devil and the world? If so, remember the promise, "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be;" keep up fellowship with God, and no enemy shall be too strong for you; follow God fully; eye the Captain of your salvation; fight in his name and strength, and *you shall* conquer every foe.

At midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon. Exod. xii. 29.

THE death of every first-born of the Egyptians carried so lively a resemblance, and bore so natural a relation to their sin in destroying every male of the Israelites, that they must needs perceive it was inflicted as a punishment for that very cruelty; and consequently must conclude, that the God of Israel took particular notice of human transactions, and, sooner or later, rewarded every man according to his works. The gradual increase of the judgments inflicted on Egypt is somewhat remarkable, and equally expressive of the mercy and justice of God. The first four plagues were loathsome rather than fatal to the Egyptians; but after that of the flies came the murrain, which chiefly spent its rage upon the cattle; the boils and blains reached both man and beast, though there was still a reserve for life; the hail and locusts extended, in a great measure, even to life itself; the first by an immediate stroke, and both consequently by destroying the fruits of the earth. That of darkness added consternation to their minds, and lashes to their consciences; and when all this would not reclaim, at length came the decisive blow; first, the slaying of the first-born, and then the drowning of the incorrigible tyrant and all his host. "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints!"

Solomon's Prayer.—*Draw me, we will run after thee.* Song of Sol. i. 4.
Divine Answer.—*I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* Jer. xxxi. 3. See also Rom. viii. 39.

MANY and various are the ways the Almighty takes in bringing his children to himself, and to a knowledge of the things of their peace. Sometimes he draws by the silken bands of love; sometimes by the still small voice of his Spirit; sometimes by the knotted cords of pain and sickness; sometimes he drives them by the storm and tempest of his broken law; but most effectually in giving his Son to die for them. Reader, pray always to him to make you sensible of the secret tender drawings of his love, and willing to follow them directly. This praying always is very needful, because we are always in want, and without being instant and earnest we cannot receive much. Therefore it is not a hard command, but a great benefit and privilege; as if God should say, "You are a poor child, always wanting something; but you may always pray to me, and I will always hear, and assist, and draw you after me."

O draw me, Saviour, after thee:
So shall I run and never tire:
With gracious words still comfort me,
And be my hope and whole desire.
No lust can stir, or guilty fear,
Nor worldly wish, if thou art there.

They that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. ii. 30.

THIS is part of the prophet's message to Eli, when he honoured his sons above God. He had indeed reproved them, saying, "Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people;" but he did not exert his authority in punishing them as they deserved when they slighted his reproof. This was accounted by God as winking at their sin. He therefore acquaints him that Hophni and Phinehas, as they had sinned together, should die together, and his posterity be cut off in the flower of their age, and from the high priesthood. Eli was not much affected with this prophecy, till the threatening was repeated by Samuel, an artless child, who did not know the voice of the Lord till Eli instructed him. It appeared then much more terrible than from the mouth of the prophet; and led him humbly to acknowledge the justice of God, and to submit to the sentence with a truly penitent heart. This is written for our admonition. Are we valiant for the truth, regarding neither father nor mother, nor the most tender relation, where the interest and honour of our God are concerned? Parents, let this be a warning to you to train up your children in the fear of the Lord: "For the arms of the wicked shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous." Ps. xxxvii. 17.

The Lord Jehovah calls,
Be every ear inclined;
May such a voice awake each heart,
And captivate each mind.

Abraham against hope believed in hope. Rom. iv. 18.

ABRAHAM'S faith seemed to be in a thorough correspondence with the power and constant faithfulness of Jehovah. In the outward circumstances in which he was placed, he had not the greatest cause to expect the fulfilment of the promise. Yet he believed the word of the Lord, and looked forward to the time when his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. O my soul, thou hast not one single promise only, like Abraham, but a thousand promises, and many patterns of faithful believers before thee: it behoves thee, therefore, to rely with confidence upon the word of God. And though the Lord delay his help, and the evil seem to grow worse and worse, be not weak but rather strong, and rejoice, since the most glorious promises of God are generally fulfilled in such a wondrous manner, that he steps forth to save us at a time when there is the least appearance of it. He commonly brings his help in our greatest extremity that his finger may plainly appear in our deliverance. And this method he chooses, that we may not trust upon anything that we see or feel, as we are often apt to do, but only upon his bare word, which we may depend upon in every state.

How large the promise, how divine!
To Abra'm and his seed:
"I'll be a God to thee and thine,
Supplying all their need."
The words of this extensive love
From age to age endure;
The Angel of the Covenant proves,
And seals the blessing sure.

Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Gal. i. 16. *The king's commandment was urgent;* much more the commandment of the King of kings. Dan. iii. 22. Therefore, *be not slothful in business,* but *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* Rom. xii. 11.

THE speediest and easiest method to accomplish our desire of overcoming the evil and doing the good, is an immediate compliance with our first convictions, without conferring with flesh and blood. If we delay the work, we give room to other people without, and to Satan and to our sinful hearts from within, to persuade us to the contrary; by which the flesh can easily renew its strength, and the spirit will be weakened. And what will be the consequence of this? but that, either we miscarry in our design, or that the conflict will be afterwards so much sharper, and the good work, if not stifled, dropped entirely; yet if it be done, it will not be done so completely, and with such singleness of heart, as it should be. But if we narrowly watch our hearts, and directly engage with even the least opposition when it stirs, then our enemies will not be so strong, and we shall have no reason to despair.

Jesus, mighty to renew,
Work in me to will and do;
Turn my nature's rapid tide,
Stem the torrent of my pride.

Take away my darling sin,
Make me willing to be clean;
Make me willing to receive
What thy goodness waits to give.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness. Rom. vi. 13. *Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.* Rom. xii. 1.

IF God has my members as weapons and instruments in his hands, I shall certainly be able not only to work, but also to conquer, since he understands full well how to manage them. May the Lord only give me grace not to wind myself out of his hands, else I must needs be like a dead, useless carcase; for how can a pen write alone, without being in the hand of a writer? It is true, indeed, it is very hard, nay impossible, to be really good, and to do all that is good, if we undertake it alone; but God himself living and working in us, and we truly delighting in him, it is very easy and pleasant. Therefore care is only to be taken that our hearts may be always the working-place, and our members the instruments of God, in which and through which he can perform everything himself.

Now God I serve; to him alone
My thankful homage pay;
My only master Christ I own,
And him will I obey.

To him my members I present,
Which he will not refuse;
The meanest, basest instrument,
His glory deigns to use.

Come then, my soul, to God the Lord,
In holy ardour come;
Obey the precepts of his word,
Until he calls thee home.

The fear of man bringeth a snare. Prov. xxix. 25. *Be not conformed to this world.* Rom. xii. 2. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* 1 John ii. 15.

HOW many people swell with pride and vanity, for such things as they would not know how to value at all, but that they are admired in the world. How fearful are many of having their houses poorly furnished, or themselves meanly clothed, for this only reason, lest the world should make no account of them, and place them amongst low and mean people. How often would a man yield to the haughtiness and ill-nature of others, and show a submissive temper, but that he dares not pass for such a poor-spirited man in the opinion of the world! How many wish to be real Christians, and would practise Christian temperance and sobriety, were it not for the censure the world passes upon such a life! Others have frequent intentions of living up to the rules of Christianity, from which they are frighted by considering what the world would say of them. Thus does the impression which we have received from living in the world enslave our minds, that we dare not attempt to be eminent in the sight of God and holy angels, for fear of being little in the eyes of the world. Reader, how is it with thee? Art thou still hanging between God and the world? Consider for a moment; what can the world give thee in exchange for the favour of God? What can it help thee in sickness, death, and judgment? Reflect seriously on this with prayer unto God, and the snares of the world will be broken.

At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth. Dan. ix. 23. *Continuing instant in prayer.* Rom. xii. 12.

OH comfortable and encouraging thought! that in the same moment the supplication ascended, the gracious answer descended. When we pray with simplicity and earnestness of soul, the return of grace and love meets our request before it hath ascended half way to heaven; and when the Lord is going to bless us, he pours out a spirit of prayer, and raises a desire for that particular blessing he is going to communicate. Therefore, when we are enabled to pray earnestly we may be sure that blessings are coming, and that we shall certainly receive in due time a seasonable and visible help. Then let us only go on, and put, as it were, one weight of prayers after another upon the scales of the sanctuary. But it is well to be observed, that we must also be watchful, and not act contrary to the intent of our prayers, which might provoke the Lord to delay his help. But when he tarries long, it is not his intention to give us a denial, but rather make us more desirous and earnest, that he may bestow the more upon us afterwards; for this delay he will certainly well recompense, and grant us abundantly above all that we could ask or think.

Lord, I will not let thee go
Till the blessing thou bestow;
Hear my Advocate divine;
Lo! to his my suit I join.
Joined to his, it cannot fail;
Jesus' suing must prevail.
Friend of sinners, King of saints,
Answer my minutest wants.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat. Gen. iii. 6. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, &c.* James i. 15.

THUS one sin always begets another; by the eyes it rushes into the heart; from the heart it proceeds into the mouth, hands, and feet; from us it is transferred upon others, and thus we go on sinning, and falling deeper and deeper. Therefore, we must set a strict guard over our eyes and ears; be very cautious, and resist the least beginnings of sin, not making light of any; for the least spark of worldly lust being entertained and cherished, we eat of the forbidden tree, standing everywhere before us, and thereby a great fire may be kindled. But having always our eyes fixed, and all our conversation upon the presence of God in Christ, so as to walk continually in the light, and directly to quell the least inward motions of evil, they will never break forth into gross outward sins, but we shall daily grow in grace. May the Lord enable me to practise this good lesson, and may he himself watch continually over my heart, eyes, lips, and all other senses and thoughts.

With my whole heart I seek thy face,
O let me never stray
From thy commands, O God of grace,
Nor tread the sinner's way.

The preaching of the cross is unto us, which ar
power of God. 1 Cor. i. 18.

O THAT I might always feed upon the
experience its power, till I have obtai
plete victory! Whosoever was bit by a fie
and looked upon the brazen serpent, live
xxi. 9. Thus always to look upon Chris
is the one thing needful, from which all o
ings flow. "And as Moses lifted up the
the wilderness, even so must the Son of ma
up; that whosoever believeth in him s
perish, but have eternal life. For God s
Son into the world to condemn the world
the world through him might be saved."
14, 15, 17. O may the eyes of my faitl
immovably on thee, my crucified Saviou
long as I live I shall feel the biting of the o
and therefore I have need to look unto th
ually; and thou, gracious Lord, afford me
by day, with entire healing at last!

So did the Hebrew prophet raise
The brazen serpent high;
The wounded felt immediate ease,
The camp forbore to die.

Look upward in the dying hour,
And live, the prophet cries;
But Christ performs a nobler cure
When faith lifts up her eyes.

High on the cross the Saviour hung,
High in the heavens he reigns;
Here sinners, by th' old serpent stung,
Look and forget their pains.

The law is not made for a righteous man (to condemn him). 1 Tim. i. 9. *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.* Rom. xiii. 3. See also Gal. iii. 16 to end.

THE righteous man being dead to the law by the death of Christ, and living to God in righteousness, the law can condemn him no more than a dead man, or one that liveth in heaven already, nay Christ himself; for it condemns only the sin, but he is in Christ without sin; for the sin being abolished, the wrath and curse of the law are also removed, and grace and blessing restored in its place. Christ has taken all his sins upon himself, and imparted his own perfect obedience to the law to him; therefore in Christ he has fully satisfied all the demands of the law, and is entirely free from its dreadful curse in his conscience; the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins, and consequently from an evil conscience. Heb. ix. 9, 14; and x. 22. Being sprinkled with his blood, and graciously covered with his golden robes, the Lord is perfectly pleased, and finds no more fault with us. The atoning blood makes intercession for us with God, crying continually, "Abba, abba; mercy, mercy; peace, peace;" and obtains grace, pardon, life, and salvation.

Blood has a voice to pierce the skies;
Revenge! the blood of Abel cries;
But the dear stream when Christ was slain,
Speaks peace as loud from every vein.

There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, &c.
Deut. xxxiii. 26.

N these last words of Moses, we have the glory of God set forth. The whole universe God hath made for his own use, to be the chariot for him to ride in, as is represented in Ezekiel's vision. God's throne is in heaven, where he sits and governs. This visible universe, subject to such continual changes and revolutions, we may compare to the wheels of his chariot. God's providence is represented by the motion of the wheels; he brings to pass his own counsels in the lower world, and manages and directs all, as a man doth his chariot which he turns as it pleaseth him. How safe then must they be who are under the wing of the God of Jeshurun; who find him reconciled to them by the death of his Son; and feel themselves reconciled to him by the power of his grace. "He rideth on the heavens for their help." Verily, he rideth on the heavens for their victory to his people; blessed be God! Reader, is the God of Jeshurun, the God of Israel, thy God? Is he who rideth on the heavens thy help? Does thine heart trust in him alone, and his grace subdue thine outward iniquities, and thine inbred corruption? Is he who rideth on the sky thine excellency? If the Lord is not thy help, alas, thou wilt prove a ruined soul. If the Lord is not thy excellency, thou art still a stranger unto God and Christ. Arise, and call upon God: his ear is open to prayer, and thou art yet on mercy's ground. Cry upon him speedily and cry unto him earnestly, thou perish not.

Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have. Heb. xiii. 5. *For they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil, &c.* 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

A COVETOUS man is called an idolator, and has no part in the kingdom of God; but who believes that he is covetous? Now, here you see that every one is actually covetous who is not content with what he has. And what says the apostle of such as will be rich? They fall. Not only may they fall, but they actually do fall; nor can the fall be avoided, if men are determined they will be rich. O reader, be thou frightened; get the covetous desires of thy heart subdued, and keep disentangled from worldly things; for who knows how soon thou must go out of this world, and leave everything behind? Away with it from thy heart, else thy death will be very hard. The Christian's motto is, *God and enough;* for he that has God is content; and consequently always rich enough, even in poverty; and that must be a covetous man indeed, who has not enough, having God! O Lord, make me so free by faith from the love of earthly things, that I may equally praise thee, whether thou be pleased to give me something, or to take it away from me! and that I may never covetously refuse that to others or to myself, which thou hast given for my own and my neighbour's comfort.

The soul of the diligent shall be made fat. Prov. xiii. 4. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.* Rom. viii. 12.

YOU are concerned for having no more grace! What is the reason? Perhaps you are indolent, careless, and unfaithful. And though you have no warrant even for an hour to live, yet unreasonably you suppose you have time enough; therefore you are not serious, diligent, and fervent in prayer for sufficient strength to be always prepared and have boldness in death. No wonder, if you do not immediately resist sin, that it grows strong, and you always are weak and discouraged. And how can you expect to receive more grace, if you do not faithfully improve what little you have? If you would but diligently and faithfully apply yourself to the word and prayer, God would certainly not be wanting on his part to fulfil his promises, and give you enough; but not otherwise; for it is well to observe, that we must know it once for all, that there is no such thing as making any progress in grace, and carrying our point, unless we are mindful of ourselves; watching and praying against all sins, and whatever may be an hindrance, on the one hand; and following with all diligence that which is good, and what may be a furtherance, on the other. It is not enough to use some, but we must use all diligence; and according as our grace is increased, our diligence must increase also, since it goes against the stream.

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Phil. ii. 3. *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; for if a man think himself to be something, &c. But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.* Gal. vi. 2-4.

IF we were truly humble, and looked upon ourselves as most miserable sinners, we should willingly submit to all adversities, and patiently bear the burdens and infirmities of others, considering that God has borne with us a great deal more. Observing, therefore, the faults of our neighbour, we must not forget our own. Perhaps in other things we are weaker than he. This will restrain us from judging rashly, or speaking unadvisedly to others; but first, we should speak to God about it, and then try with gentle means to bring them to rights again. Nay, the best method is to consider our neighbour on the good, and ourselves on the bad side, and to see whether we can excuse him and accuse ourselves; and if his fault could not be excused in any manner, we must not suffer him to stir up our corruption, but come in with prayer between God and him, to plead his cause before the throne in hearty love. It is very easy to find fault with others; but to show love, and restore them by prayer and brotherly correction, is quite another thing.

Bless'd are the souls who stand afar
From rage and passion, noise and war;
God will secure their happy state,
And plead their cause against the great.

The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them. Ps. cxlv. 15, 16, 19. See also Ps. civ. 27, 28.

WHO considers these words enough? The hand of God being my chief provision and storehouse, is it not a shame to be anxiously careful for anything? Has the Lord all things in his hand? then surely I shall receive what he has for me; none will be able to withhold it. Faith has always a free access to the treasures of God, who is never wanting. Christians have their chests and treasures in such a high place, even in God, that no thief can rob them, and they are sure to have enough in God; and though the Lord should try them with want a little while, yet he relieves them in due time; their bread must rain from heaven, rather than they should be left without. You need not, says Christ, seek these other things; they shall be brought to you, if ye only abide in me. If this does not comfort and strengthen us, nothing else will. Many rely on their full pockets and purses; but if they had true faith, it would be enough that they believed and had it in God's hand, purse and chest. If the Lord is pleased to bestow some provision on his servant, he is very thankful for it, and is careful to apply it well. But if God thinks proper to deny it him, he is content, and cheerful.

The Lord is good, the Lord is kind;
Great is his grace, his mercy sure;
And the whole race of man shall find
His truth from age to age endure.

They withstood Uzziah the king, and said, It appertaineth not unto thee, to burn incense unto the Lord. 2 Chron. xxvi. 18.

HERE is the only blot we find on the name of Uzziah: as long as he sought the Lord in the right way, God made him to prosper. God helped him till he was strong; but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his own destruction. He was not content with the honours God had put upon him, but would usurp those that were forbidden him, like our first parents. The chief priests and other priests were ready to burn incense for the king, according to the duty of their office; and plainly acquainted him, that if, through a mistaken zeal, he offered to do it himself, he would incur the wrath of God and suffer for it; but this served only to excite his wrath, till he felt the judgment of God's hand in his punishment. Though he strove with the priests, he would not strive with his Maker, but retired as soon as he was smitten with the leprosy. Thus we see that the God we have to deal with is "a jealous God," who expects all that serve him shall do it according to his own institutions. Do you, reader, come to him in the way of his appointment? Take care that you come not with unhallowed fire before the Lord, lest you be also smitten. Our prayers, our graces, and our duties, must always be put by faith into the hand of our Lord Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, to be by him presented unto God along with the sweet incense of his merits, else we shall find ourselves deceived, and have no acceptance with God.

He (the Lord) will beautify the meek with salvation. Ps. cxlix. 4. *And if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye.* 1 Pet. iii. 14. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* Ps. x. 17. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.* Ps. xxii. 26. *But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.* Ps. xxxvii. 11. See also Ps. xlviii. 10. Isa. liv. 11.

ALL this is for the humble and poor in spirit. How does this agree? poor, and yet blessed? we are poor in ourselves, but blessed and glorious in Christ. If we never experience his glory, the reason is, we are not truly sensible of our misery; but when we are brought quite low, let us confidently lay hold on Christ, and we shall be blessed; for all is ours. We may say, O Lord, if thou art a glorious help to the needy, lo! here is want and misery enough! therefore I come with all my want and poverty to the fulness of thy grace and riches, with my darkness to thy light, with my death to thy life. Grant that all my evils may be swallowed up by thy goodness and glorious deliverance! Mine innumerable wants I set before thee, as so many empty vessels, and desire to have them filled with thy spiritual and heavenly blessings.

O might I hear the heavenly tongue,
 But whisper, "Thou art mine!"
Those gentle words should raise my song
 To notes almost divine.
How would my leaping heart rejoice,
 And think my heaven secure
I trust the all-creating Voice,
 And faith desires no more.

Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind. And put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. iv. 23, 24. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Rom. vi. 4.

O LORD, grant me daily repentance, and a tender feeling of my sins, that by the power of thy death the old man may be crucified, and by the power of thy resurrection the new man may rise up and grow in grace, being filled and refreshed with the fruits of the Spirit! Let me ever be in earnest and look upon every day as the very first and the very last, that with each I may, as it were, begin anew to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, and so be always prepared for death and eternity. Give me grace to surmount all difficulties, and to avoid everything that may prove a torment of conscience in the hour of death. And as there is no standing still, I humbly beseech thee to stir me up daily and hourly more and more, that I may make all haste, and "give all diligence to make my calling and election sure."

Lord, I am vile, conceived in sin!
And born unholy and unclean!
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts the race, and taints us all.

Soon as we draw our infant breath,
The seeds of sin grow up for death;
The law demands a perfect heart;
But we're defiled in every part.

He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness endureth for ever. Ps. cxii. 9. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand.* Eccles. xi. 6.

THOSE that lay up treasures on earth, suffer nothing to lie long useless, but lend out as fast as they can; and such as desire to reap soon and plentifully, are careful to sow soon and plentifully. Therefore, lend and sow ye also in good time, for there may be times when you cannot show charity, or at least not so largely. We must not pretend to pay the debt of charity with some poor mites and pence. If you will give something, give bountifully; take your hands full, as if you were sowing, like the poor widow with her two mites, which she sowed out freely, though it were her whole substance. But the rich ones were not so liberal, but covetously offered only what they could spare very well. Is it not said we should sow? Now seedsmen sow with hands full, and so should we; for God loveth a cheerful giver, and will in his turn dispense again bountifully to you, that ye should have sufficiency in all things to every good work (but God dispensing so bountifully to you, why should you then grudge him anything, or make only such poor returns?); for what we do to our neighbour, is the same as if it were done to God himself, if done in faith and love.

Awake, my zeal; awake, my love,
And serve my Saviour here below,
In works which all the saints above
And holy angels cannot do.

He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Ps. cxxx. 8. *O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.* Jer. xiv. 8. *In wrath remember mercy.* Hab. iii. 2.

DESPAIR not, O my soul, in any tribulation or conflict, as if it were impossible to overcome it. The all-healing word of God contains advice and comfort for all cases. The Lord being thy helper in all adversity, and able to turn the sharpest afflictions into the greatest blessings, he would never smite, nor withhold anything from thee, if he were not willing also to heal, and give thee something better in its place. O Lord, I trust thou wilt carry me through all difficulties. Though my misery and weakness were ever so great, yet there is nothing too great for thee; it is all one to thee to help in great and little distresses; nay, the more I am surrounded with grief and weakness, the more wilt thou pity, spare, and nourish me, as a tender mother does the least of all her children; and the more occasion there will be to display thy mighty salvation. The sharper and longer my distress and conflicts have been, the nearer, greater, and sweeter, I trust, will also be my salvation; for the same Lord who has said I shall not be tried above measure, has also engaged to lead me on conquering, till at length all my enemies are subdued.

There's full redemption at his throne
For sinners long enslaved;
The great Redeemer is his Son,
And Israel shall be saved.

A hope so great, and so divine,
May trials well endure;
And purge the soul from sense and sin,
As Christ himself is pure.

There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. Joshua vii. 13. *Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.* 2 Pet. i. 4. See also 2 Pet. ii. 18–22.

THE entertaining of any worldly lust, and indulgence of any known wilful sin, is an accursed thing, by which we are deprived of the power of God, and cannot stand before our enemies. Behold, therefore, the severity of God (Josh. vii. 21–26), and be more earnest. Make all haste to flee from the lust of the world, especially from the lust of the eye, which is the love of money. What more needful than to break off even the most subtle and specious bands of unrighteousness! Unless the splinters of the unjust Mammon be taken out, the wound cannot heal up. Nay, examine thyself closely in other things, and whatever sinful lust harbours in thy breast, be faithful to put it off, and flee from it, else you must not wonder at your being so weak in spirit. He that does not resist the sinful motions of his heart, will very easily give loose reins to his hands and tongue; but he that immediately subdues the inward corruptions, will certainly be preserved from their breaking out in any sinful actions. O Lord, deliver me from all accursed things, and keep my heart always under thy closest inspection and discipline; let it not seek after the things of sin and the flesh, which thou hast called accursed, but be thou my joy and my portion. Amen.

Why should my passions mix with earth,
And thus debase my heavenly birth?
Why should I cleave to things below,
And let my God, my Saviour, go?

I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Job xlii. 6. *I am meek and lowly in heart.* Matt. xi. 29. *Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and lowly.* Zech. ix. 9.

MY dear reader, reflect a moment who it was that made the above confession, and consider the many excellences that he had. See Job xxxi. Doubtless you will be ready to ask, Why this self-abhorrence? What did this man mean?—Let me give the answer for you: before his eyes were opened, he wanted humility, or the knowledge of his own vileness; the very thing that you need, if not deeply humbled, and the want of which makes every man vile in the eyes of God. Elihu charges Job with an undue opinion of his own righteousness; and God, who, by stroke upon stroke, and not one too much, had brought him to the dunghill, is represented as carrying on the same accusation against him. The whole issues in Job's humiliation, and conveys a most important lesson of instruction to all mankind, never to stand upon their vindication with God. The book, in this view of it, is preparatory to the Gospel, and a striking comment upon those words of St. Paul and the Psalmist, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. In thy sight shall no man living be justified."—"God be merciful to me a sinner," is a prayer easy to be said, but hard to be felt. One eye upon the perfection of God's laws, and another upon your own heart, may bring you up to it. But the Spirit's light is also needful, for which you must pray earnestly.

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Rev. v. 9.

IN heaven the saints have a full sense of their great deliverance, together with a perfect knowledge of sin, far beyond anything we now conceive of it; and the glory of redeeming grace will be the eternal ground of their love and adoration. On earth, it is the great exercise and difficult work of faith to see sin and Christ at the same time, or be penetrated with a lively sense of our desert, and absolute freedom from condemnation. But the more we know of both, the nearer approach we make to heaven; and we are our own greatest enemies, if, together with the fullest comprehension of sin, and the deepest humiliation for it, we do not look steadfastly unto Jesus, and see it taken away by the Lamb of God. This, though continually repeated by the heavenly choir, is called their New Song; because it is always matter of as great joy to them, as if they had never sung it before; and because the love of God and of Christ in their redemption is always opening upon them with new and increasing wonders. O my soul, let nothing, let not thy sin, hinder thee from beginning it now!

Saints cannot do less,
Than Jesus to bless;
His name they rely on,
His Godhead confess.
My soul, bear a part,
If ransom'd thou art,
By Jesus' blood-shedding,
His burial and smart.

Follow me. Luke v. 27. *Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* 2 Tim. ii. 3.

WOULD you follow Christ? Then follow him in self-denial, in humility, in patience, and in readiness for every good work. Follow him with a daily cross upon your back, and look to his cross to make your burden light. Follow him as your guide and guard, and learn to see with his eyes, and to trust in his arm for defence. Follow him as the Friend of sinners, who healeth the broken in heart, and giveth rest to weary souls, and casteth out none that come unto him. Follow him with faith, resting your whole acceptance with God and your title to heaven on his meritorious blood and righteousness. Lastly, follow him with much prayer; for though he is full of compassion he loves to be much entreated; and when he is determined to give a blessing, you must yet wrestle with him for it. Thus follow Jesus, and he will lead you to glory.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to love and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shall be.

Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own.

Let the world despise and leave me;
They have left my Saviour too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me,
Thou art not like them, untrue.

The Lord is not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts xvii. 27, 28. *Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.* Luke xii. 7.

OH! the close and tender love of the Lord over his people! Nothing is so mean, but it is under the providence of God, since even the least things can either hurt or profit the soul. And how sweet is it to observe his footsteps even in the minutest things, and to be satisfied that we may trust our greater and lesser concerns to his care! O Lord, grant that I may never swerve from, nor do anything without thee, but that my goings in and goings out may be always done in thy presence, as if I had to do with none but thee; nay, as if we both lived together in the world. O that I could transact all my affairs with thee alone, and in all places look upon thee as if thou wert only a God for me. Let me carefully mark the inward workings of thy grace, and the outward tokens of thy providence, so as daily to have a true sense of thy gracious presence in everything, more or less important; and thereby to be ever strengthened in faith, and kept in a composed state of mind; considering that nothing happens by mere chance, but all is wisely ordered by thy providential care to our good; firmly believing, if anything goes contrary to expectation, that something better will follow in its stead, if we only can be quiet, and wait the time.

God, that must stoop to view the skies,
And bow to see what angels do,
Down to our earth he casts his eyes,
And bends his footsteps downward too.

Cleave to that which is good. Rom. xii. 9. *Seek those things which are above.* Col. iii. 1. *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* Matt. vi. 20, 21.

THE manners of such things or persons as we frequently converse with cleave very easily to us. If we converse much with God and heavenly things, we shall be heavenly-minded; but if we deal much with the world and temporal things, we must be sensual and worldly-minded. Up, therefore, with thy heart to God: lift it hourly up to him; and though it sinks down often to the earth again, yet the Lord has patience, and will as often receive it again. Therefore raise it up continually, and take great care to keep it above, that it may not sink down and be defiled with worldly things again. Thus it will be easy to abide in a spiritual frame; but without this care we cannot abide in it at all; a feather easily rises higher and higher when kept above ground, but moves very heavily upwards, when once fallen into the dirt. This you may take as a lively figure of an easy and heavy method in the practice of religion. Choose now which you please. O that I may always choose the best, seeking the things which are above, and never plunge into the world to defile and distress my soul!

Descend from heaven, Immortal Dove,
Stoop down and take us on thy wings,
And mount and bear us far above
The reach of these inferior things.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Luke ii. 29, 30. *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, &c.* Isa. xxxv. 4.

WILFUL unbelief only is damnable, and not the weak faith of a fearful and tempted believer. If I do not reject the ransom of Christ, my surety, but feel my utter need of it, and am heartily desirous to accept it by faith, God will no more reject me than he will reject my surety, or his own eternal decree. Yet, since I have very weak faith, and am often ready to sink into despair, it passeth my understanding to conceive how I can depart this life in peace. But as God's peace is said to pass all understanding (Phil. iv. 7), it is sufficient to sustain the weakest and most fearful soul, because it is not by any power of our own, but solely by his divine power, that "we shall be kept through faith unto salvation." And it is equally the same to him to carry the weakest or the strongest through the gates of death; for since he is always the same wise, gracious, and mighty God, in all circumstances, and must do the work alone for both, I trust he will lend me also, a poor weak creature, his all-sufficient help in that time of need!

Saints by the power of God are kept,
 Till the salvation come;
We walk by faith as strangers here;
 Till Christ shall call us home.

Lord, at thy temple we appear,
 As happy Simeon came,
And hope to meet our Saviour here;
 O make our joys the same!

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. Ps. civ. 24. *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.* Ps. cvii. 43. *Many shall be purified, and made white and tried.* Dan. xii. 10. *The ways of the Lord are right, and many shall walk in them.* Hosea xiv. 9.

O LORD, how many are thine unknown mercies! I am surrounded with them on all sides, yet how little do I observe them and acknowledge them to thy praise. If thou hast punished even the heathen for not having minded and glorified thee in thy works, what will become of me? Pardon, O Lord, this my blindness and ingratitude, and to all thy other kindnesses add a thankful heart, that I may joyfully praise thee for the blessing of my creation, the daily bounty of thy providence, and the adorable gift of thy Son. In all thy creatures may I see and adore thine infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, and be thereby continually strengthened in faith, and stirred up to thy praise and love. Thus let me always converse with thee, cleave to thee, and have uninterrupted communion with thee, that nothing may disturb this pious disposition of my soul in the least. Yes, O God, grant me this wisdom and close attention for my glory's sake. Amen.

The glories of my Maker, God,
My joyful voice shall sing,
And call the nations to adore
Their Former and their King.

The brightness of our Maker's name
The wide creation fills;
And his unbounded grandeur flies
Beyond the heavenly hills.

The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Judg. vii. 20. *For they are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not.* Num. xiv. 9. *But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went.* Ver. 24. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee.* Ps. lxxvi. 10.

TAKE care, O my soul, that there may also be another, namely, a kingly spirit with thee, as there was with Joshua and Caleb, not to be discouraged on account of thy weakness, and great number of frailties and enemies, as if it were impossible to live holily and get the victory. Behold Christ, the true and great Joshua and Caleb, marches out before thee, to make war himself against thine enemies; and who can conquer him? He is unchangeable, his spirit now is as mighty as ever, and his word as powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Against thy various infirmities he offers also a variety of divine strength, and against each of thine enemies he holds forth to thee a particular sword in his word, and abiding in his word, thou shalt surely conquer. Though the enemy should raise thine inward and outward calamities to the highest degree, as so many strong walls, yet he must fall; one single word will strike him down.

Let troubles rise, and terrors frown,
And days of darkness fall:
Through him all dangers we'll defy,
And more than conquer all.

Nor death, nor life, nor earth, nor hell
Nor time's destroying sway,
Can e'er efface us from his heart,
Or make his love decay.

en unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from right-ness; I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far and my salvation shall not tarry. We are all as an ean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. xlvi. 12, 13; and lxvi. 6.

UE religion is founded upon the knowledge of the true God. Sinners are apt to think they a high opinion of God, because they think y of his mercy; whereas God is as holy and s he is merciful; and he will as certainly punish uilty as he will pardon the penitent and believ-oul. "God, I thank thee I am not as other are," says every self-righteous sinner; not con-ng that if God were extreme to mark what is , no flesh living could be justified. "God be ful to me, a sinner," says every true Christian eal believer. Till this be thy language, O my till thou feelest thyself a lost, ruined, and help-inner; till thou art brought to acknowledge the e of God in thy condemnation; till thou art n to Christ as thy only refuge and hope of tion, thou art "ignorant of God's righteousness, oing about to establish thine own righteousness, thou dost not submit to the righteousness of t."

I am, saith Christ, the Way:
Now, if we credit him,
All other paths must lead astray,
How fair soe'er they seem.

I am, saith Christ, the Truth;
Then, what doth lack this test,
Proceed it from an angel's mouth,
Is but a lie at best.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. ii. 3. *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.* 1 Tim. i. 18. *Watch thou, endure afflictions.* 2 Tim. iv. 5.

PRINCES combat with flesh and blood; Christians wrestle with principalities and powers. Their wars allow days of truce, ours not a minute's rest. Conditions of peace there may cause retreat; nothing but death can here raise the siege. Kings, if overcome, may save themselves by flight, but Christians may as soon fly from themselves as from their enemies. The soldier of Christ is in a field of continued conflict; he cannot let fall his hands but Amalek prevails. Not to be a conqueror, is to be a prisoner; not to win the field, is to lose the soul: security wounds thee, yielding kills thee, but victory crowns thee. Therefore, watch as for thy life; fight as for thy soul; the time will come when "the enemies thou seest to-day, thou shalt see them no more for ever!" then thou shalt lay down thy sword and take up thy crown, and sing "Victory, victory," for ever, through the blood of the Lamb! Let, then, the prospect of heavenly glory fire thee. Though thine enemies be powerful, yet remember to go forth against them in the strength of the Captain of thy salvation. Though assaults be many and my enemies mighty, if God strengthen me, I have enough to comfort me; for the greater my enemy, the more glorious my victory; and the more glorious my victory, the more triumphant my glory.

I will heal your backslidings. Jer. iii. 22. *He will heal us; he will bind us up.* Hosea vi. 1. *It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* Phil. ii. 13.

O MY dear Saviour, I would fain believe in thee, be faithful, obedient, and work always that which is good. And since this is also thy will, I trust it shall be done: for if thou wilt and I will, who can hinder it? True it is, that sin, the flesh, the world, and devils are against it; but shall these enemies be stronger than thou, the mighty God? Shall their opposition be able to quell thy work in me, if I do not consent to it? That can never be. The more violence they use upon me, the more earnest may I be with thee in prayer; and the more I pray, the more glorious will thine assistance be; the more they hinder, the more thou wilt further, that all their hindrances may be swallowed up by thy furtherances, as the serpents of the sorcerers in Egypt were swallowed up by the serpent of Moses. The enemy will fall by his own sword; and the greatest opposition will turn to my good, and to the promoting of thy work. Everything, indeed, can overcome me if I do not abide in Christ by a continual acting of faith and prayer; but, by thus abiding in him, all opposition proves not only weak itself, but profitable to my soul.

We honour our exalted King!
How sweet are his commands!
He guards our souls from hell and sin
By his almighty hands.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
We'll break through ev'ry foe;
The wings of love and arms of faith
Shall bear us conquerors through.

I am like a green fir-tree: from me is thy fruit found. Hosea xiv. 8. *I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground.* Mal. iii. 11. *In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.* Isa. xxvii. 2, 6.

IS it not a disagreeable thing for a gardener to see the finest blossoms and fruits destroyed by the caterpillars? Doth it not rejoice him to see all the branches bow with ripe fruits? O my heavenly Lord, grant that I may not displease, but rejoice thy heart also. Let me abide in Christ my true vine, and always bring forth good fruits. But since every fruit has its enemies, and thou hast no sooner produced anything, than the insects of sin endeavour to destroy it, I beseech thee to make me watchful of these insects, and diligent in every good work. Rebuke the devourer presently, and preserve me as a branch of Christ, night and day, as thou hast promised, that my fruits may endure to eternity. Doth a diligent gardener dress and cultivate his garden as well as he can, why shouldst not thou cultivate my heart also, since thou art honoured by my fruits? O yes; I trust the crystal stream from thy throne will water me, that I may bring forth greater plenty of fruit.

Like trees of myrrh and spice we stand
Planted by God the Father's hand;
And all his springs in Zion flow,
To make the young plantation grow.

Let my Beloved come and taste
His pleasant fruits at his own feast.
"I come, my spouse, I come," he cries,
With love and pleasure in his eyes.

I will do it. John xiv. 14. And what is that? Whatsoever thou desirest. *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him.* Ps. cxlv. 19.

YEA, he does "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think;" granting not only according to the notion of our narrow hearts, but according to the riches of his glory, as becomes his majesty. Christ delights in great petitions; for he is a great Lord, and is rich unto all that call upon him. He has all the riches of his merits and gifts, not for himself (since being very God, he wanted nothing for himself), but only for us, even the rebellious, who sincerely call upon him. Therefore, what he has as Mediator, all belongs to me, if I do but call upon him faithfully. O my soul, pray to him; nay, be much in prayer; and as often as thou pourest out thy soul before him in prayer, let nothing resound in thy heart but these words: "I will; I will do it." As God can never lie, there is not one single groan lost; but every one will be found to be a jewel in the life to come: by which thy riches are increased, and one treasure put to another. O! how much is there neglected in this already! why shouldst thou not be earnest now to redeem that little remaining part of thy time, by prayer for eternity, to lay up there many treasures, and richly adorn thy crown. O Lord, grant that this may be done!

Now is the time, he lends his ear,
And waits for your request;
Come, lest he rouse his wrath, and swear
"Ye shall not see my rest!"

Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretch
the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inha
of Ai. Josh. viii. 26. *For this purpose the Son of G*
manifested, that he might destroy the works of the
1 John iii. 8.

A WILLING subjection to any one sin is nc
sistent with the grace of God and true
faith (Rom. vi. 14); for though wicked inhal
will abide in the heart, and sometimes prevail o
believer, they must not reign there, nor shou
suffered to stir without resistance; since we m
utterly ruined by the dominion of a single sin, t
by a single subjection to it, as by the dominic
thousand, just as a bird is caught in one single
and though you are actually converted, and
gained the dominion over your sins, yet you mu
draw back your hand, and lay the spear and the
of the Spirit aside. There is no truce in this wa
any rest found but in fighting; for if you be
your enemies, they beat you. Therefore the Ch
soldier's watch-word is, Fight on, looking to
Satan left Christ only for a time; much more
renew his assaults upon us again and again.
the conflict lasteth long, remember that is al
case of others; and even the ancient fathers hav
under it till they were grey; at last the victory
the more sweet and glorious. Only, above all t
take the shield of faith, for faith alone triumph
which we are in covenant with Christ, and he
one cause with us.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Isa. lv. 1. *Come, for all things are now ready.* Luke xiv. 17. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* John vi. 37.

HOW could a tender mother's heart cast out her sick child, calling for help! Come, my poor soul, come only as well as thou canst. Better to come in a cold, fearful, miserable condition, than not at all; for if we cannot come boldly to Christ with a strong faith, we must even come trembling, just as we are; nor will such coming be offensive to Christ; for he says, "Him that cometh," come how he will, "I will in no wise cast out." A feeling of joy is not needful to bring us to Christ, but a feeling of our wants; for it is not required to bring any money of our own worthiness, but only the whole heap of our misery along with us, and desire grace. God does not look upon the sensible joy of faith (for this is his particular gift, which he could soon give, if need were), but upon the sincerity, application, and earnestness of a poor sinner. John Bunyan fitly compares such a one to a man who would fain ride a full gallop, whose horse is hardly able to go a good trot. In this instance, the intention of the rider is not to be judged by the slow pace of his horse (which resembles our corrupt and unwilling nature), but by his whippings, spurrings, and beatings of the beast.

See, dearest Lord, our willing souls
Accept thine offered grace;
We bless the great Redeemer's love,
And give the Father praise.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good xii. 21. *For who is he that will harm you, if ye be f of that which is good?* 1 Pet. iii. 13. *All thin together for good to them that love God.* Rom. viii.

THE Christian life is a warfare, and the between sin and holiness, and between and comfort, is often very violent. The child has many evils to encounter. Sin, Satan, s the world are daily enemies. He is also expo to poverty, affliction, reproaches, and persecuti my Saviour, help me to overcome all evil in the s of thy grace; give me a heart to do good to may seek to hurt me. Who is he that will ha if ye be followers of that which is good? M Father, for he loves you; not Jesus, for he d you; not the Spirit, his work is to comfort yo good men, they love those who follow that w good; not wicked men or devils, for though e they are confined, and cannot stir one step what thy God and Saviour permits them. Wh meet with a trial, look not to men but to Jesus. for patience to bear it, and look up for a blessin it. Then all things shall work together for thy Rom. viii. 28. Let every temptation make yo careful, and put you on closer watching agai enemy. Cleave to Jesus by faith and prayer, child to its parent, when it sees an enemy towards it. Behold him, flee to him, rest upo and then you will rejoice in him.

How glorious, Lord, thy wisdom shines,
And baffles Satan's deep designs:
Thy power is sov'reign to fulfil
The noblest counsels of thy will.

shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he ised. Ps. lxxii. 15. *Thy kingdom come.* Matt. vi. 10. *out your hearts before him.* Ps. lxii. 8.

VHAT a condescending King we have, who may always be approached! Who would not You say, O that my coldness and indifference permit me to do it! But are you not sensible ır wants and miseries? Is not this coldness ackwardness misery enough? Therefore you also to pray, and to pray most when you are l and drowsy, else it will never be better with Arise, therefore, and pray; the good Spirit of will assist you in it. "Encouraged by the ses of a prayer-hearing God, and the special nce of the Holy Spirit in this work, we must, n the greatest conflicts, not omit to resist the ations of the devil. And though we have , not defer it long; but pray directly, and he Lord is merciful, and I am unworthy and : to pray! but, alas! what shall I do? Shall I ill I am worthy and able? O no; perhaps that vill never come; for I am always a great miser- inner. A Christian stands always in need of ; for since the sense of sin does not leave him, st not leave off prayer. Lord, grant me more of irit of prayer, and let it never be extinguished heart!

Arise, my soul, from deep distress,
And banish every fear;
God calls thee to his throne of grace,
To spread thy sorrows there.

What dost thou here, Elijah? 1 Kings xix. 13.

LET this question be supposed as addressed to us: What dost thou here in this world? Art thou "working the work of him that sent thee," or standing all the day idle? Art thou in the post assigned thee by Heaven, truly called, and properly qualified for it, and faithfully discharging the duties of it? or hast thou thrust thyself into it without warrant or invitation; and therefore hast no cause to expect success? What dost thou here in this retirement? Is the world shut out of thy thoughts, and are the visits of the blessed Spirit invited? What dost thou here, if thy peace with an offended God is not already made, or most earnestly desired and sought after? If thou really want peace and safety, plead the blood of Jesus, flee to the city of refuge. What dost thou here in times of trial and temptation? Art thou flying from the danger, or boldly facing it in the name and strength of the Lord? Art thou ashamed of the cross, or dost thou willingly take it upon thee? Elijah failed here; he fled from Jezebel. And did such an one as Elijah fear? Then howl, ye fir-trees, if the cedars be thus shaken! hold fast by Christ, ye weak ones, if the strong fall! What dost thou here below? Art thou for pitching thy tent on this side Jordan, satisfied with thy present portion? or art thou "looking to a better country, to a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"? Life is uncertain, death approaches, the Judge is at *the door,* then "prepare to meet thy God."

Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. Ps. xxv. 15. *Happy is the man that feareth alway.* Prov. xxviii. 14.

O HOW long can some enemies hide themselves with their nets before our eyes, and draw in all on a sudden! It is unspeakable how cunning and powerful our enemies are, how they lie in wait everywhere, so that in all places, and at all times, we are surrounded with many cruel murderers of souls! Blessed is he that keeps clear from self-confidence, and fearing always, says within himself, as soon as he awakes in the morning, Who knows what temptations I may meet with to-day? perhaps when I arise, at the first step my feet may be entangled in dangerous snares and nets. And as self-confidence ever will be ashamed, and a firm confidence in the Lord never shall (Rom. ix. 33), grant, O Lord, I beseech thee, that, distrusting myself, I may fully put my trust on thee, watching evermore in all things, and looking cautiously in all places about me, where there is any fear of danger. Whatever I am about to do or to speak, let me first converse with thee by prayer; that keeping always close to thee, I may be preserved against the power and craft of mine enemies, as in a stronghold; and confidently say, according to thy own pattern given, "I have set the Lord before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Ps. xvi. 8).

God is my portion and my joy;
His counsels are my light,
He gives me sweet advice by day,
And gentle hints by night.

My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. For as the F raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so th quickeneth whom he will. John v. 17, 21. See also Jol 4, and xiv. 10.

O MY poor soul, is not the blessed Trinity God in three Persons, able to destroy the w of the devil, and fulfil his good-will in thee? O he works both to will and to do; and that thing which is above your own power, he works, nothing else. If you can do little, he works m if nothing at all, so much the better, then he w all; for he is our all, since we are nothing, and do nothing. And happy are we that we can have for our support in all things; and that the chil of God are not required to direct their own s but shall be led by their heavenly Father. No Lord, since by the will, guidings, and working o own heart, I throw only so many hindrances blocks in my way, grant, I beseech thee, that, in dependence on thee, I may venture everything; despairing of my own sufficiency, may always in thee, draw all necessary strength from the prayer, and bring forth many good fruits which last to eternity! For thy work in true belie weak as it may seem now, will last for ever, none shall be able to destroy it.

Lord, let thy counsels guide my feet
Through this dark wilderness;
Thy hand conduct me near thy seat,
To dwell before thy face!

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James iv. 7, 8. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Chap. v. 16.

O MY dear soul, draw nigh to God in prayer, and he will draw nigh to thee; be instant in it, and the devil cannot stand against thee: for prayers will drive away sin and Satan, as the wind drives the smoke before it; prayer works wonderfully great things, and will make possible what seemeth impossible. If God has given thee some spiritual blessings already, this is an encouragement to hope also for that which thou lackest yet: therefore only pray confidently, and thou shalt receive evermore; for unbelief is the only reason that God cannot work wonders for us. Pour out upon my soul, thou living and wonder-working God, the spirit of prayer; let me pray and strive, pray in faith, and pour out my whole heart before thee. Ps. lxii. 8. Let me strive in faith that the Lord may impart the blessing, and draw nigh to me; for without thee with me all my prayers and all my strivings are in vain.

My God, I bow before thy feet,
When shall my soul get near thy seat?
When shall I see thy glorious face,
With mingled majesty and grace?

How should I love thee and adore,
With hopes and joys unknown before?
And bid this trifling world begone;
Nor tease my heart so near thy throne.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Gal. ii. 20.

IN spiritual things we are too often living upon self. We seek in frames, forms, creatures, and animal life, that inward peace and stability of mind which is only to be found in the Redeemer. Outward duties are well in their place, but they have no divine life in themselves, and therefore none to give. They are to be performed, but not trusted in; to be used with grace, but cannot buy grace. They are as the scaffold of the building, a means for carrying on the work, but not the end of the great design. In the power of Christ they are blessings; without it they have no power. The whole trust must be in Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life: without him prayers, praises, rites, and ordinances are carcases without a soul. Every performance of outward worship is so, unless the Saviour fills it with his divine Spirit. Then it is we experience a communion of heart, a reviving of the soul of the adorable Jesus, and a delightful view behind the veil of outward ordinances (such as no carnal eye can behold), manifesting the Lord in his goodness, beauty, grandeur, blessedness, and glory.

The faith and hope of things unseen
My best affections move;
Thy light, thy favour, and thy smiles,
Thine everlasting love.

Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. Exod. ii. 9.

AS Moses was ordered to be saved by his enemy's daughter, so Satan himself, even when he meditates our destruction, must be a means of our life. So also Matt. xii. 48. *Who is my mother*, &c., Isa. viii. 10, and ix. 6. O Lord Jesus, if thou art a child born unto me, and I am willing to receive thee as my Immanuel, thou wilt be my shield and exceeding great reward, and defend me powerfully against all my enemies. O my dear Saviour, if thou art mine, all is mine, even thy Father, thy Spirit, and thy heavenly glory; all accidents, all enemies must work for my good, and be instruments and ministers of my salvation. O that I may, trusting in thee, never fear anything, but thinking directly it is mine, may only make good use of everything. Thus even the very worst would turn to my greatest blessing; and without it perhaps I should want as needful a thing as a mill or a ship does when destitute of wind and water.

My soul, survey thy happiness,
If thou art found a child of grace:
How richly is the Gospel stored!
What joy the promises afford!

All things are now the gift of God,
And purchased with our Saviour's blood;
While the good Spirit shows us how
To use and to enjoy them too.

If peace and plenty crown my days,
They help me, Lord, to speak thy praise;
If bread of sorrows be my food,
Those sorrows work my real good.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord. Eph. v. 19. *Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns.* Col. iii. 16. *Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.* Acts xvi. 25.

IF we are obliged to promote the temporal good of our neighbour, how much more the spiritual, by edifying discourse! But how is it! The children of God, when a person visits them (says a certain divine), are sometimes troubled, and know not what discourse to enter upon: at last they begin an unprofitable discourse, or at least they suffer others to do it, and are silent at it. I will tell you what I have done in such cases: I first prayed to God, saying, "O good God, here I receive a guest, and have nothing to set before and treat him with; I pray thee to give me the right bread for him;" which the Lord was pleased to hear in such a gracious manner, that I could sooner enter into an edifying discourse. And thus we keep our conscience clean; and though perhaps the lips are frozen up at first, they are thawed and opened by prayer. Some foolish philosophers, to the great offence of others, mock at divine things, and even at prayer; as if we needed no other help than our own depraved reason and will. But what St. Paul says (Rom. i. 22) is fulfilled in them:—"Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools." What will become of these poor scoffers upon their dying bed, and at the day of judgment! *O that* they would take warning while it is time.

Tell his disciples, and Peter (who was deeply fallen) esp
Mark. xvi. 7. *If any man sin, we have an advoca*
the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is t
pitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also
sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 1, 2. *Wherefore,*
the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.
xii. 12.

HAST thou been slack, unfaithful, and
away? O poor soul, thou art not to make
of it; but why wilt thou continue in thy faller
dition any longer, and complain? Get thee u
ask pardon of Christ; he is ready to forgive a
ceive thee again, like Peter, "having received
for the rebellious." Delay not to lay hold
ransom, which is greater than all the sins
world; nay, the ransom is paid for this very si
a pardon purchased by it already. Therefore
out and be not discouraged, nor listen to the te
tion of giving up hope, and turning back t
world. The Lord even now reaches forth his
to thee anew by this very word; come, lift thys
at it, and be careful for the time to come to
much more cautious, humble, and gentle to
others; for a Christian's foot may trip; but
recovered, it slides deeper into humility.

Salvation! O the joyful sound,
'Tis pleasure to mine ears;
A sov'reign balm for every wound,
A cordial for my fears.

Buried in sorrow and in sin
At hell's dark door I lay;
But I arise, by grace divine,
To see a heavenly day.

Behold, we come unto thee. Jer. iii. 22. *I will come unto you.* John xiv. 18. For a lively representation of this happy meeting, see Luke xix. 4-6. *Zaccheus ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.* And Christ said unto him, *Make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.*

O MY dear Saviour, since I come to thee, and thou to me, we shall certainly meet one another. Who will oppose and obstruct it? The devil and sin? Oh no! this wall of separation is pulled down. Christ says "Come unto me; I am not an angry judge, but a loving Mediator between God and thy frightened conscience: keep to me, and fear no wrath. I sit here, that, if thou believe in me to make intercession for thee with God, no wrath or disgrace can befall thee. Should wrath and punishment come upon thee, it must first come upon me: wrath is quite impossible." Yes, O my soul, it is indeed impossible; for thy Jesus is the dear Son of God, in whom dwells all the fulness of grace, and the Father looking upon him, his wrath must vanish away, and everything in heaven and earth be changed into smiles of love and grace. Eph. i. 6. Dangers and conflicts being hot, God hastens with his assistance. At other times he tarries, and the work of our whole renovation goes on by little and little, that, improving in the exercise of patience and faith, we may also bear with others, and learn not only to quicken our diligence, but also to wait for him.

In thine own ways, O God of love,
We wait the visits of thy grace;
Our soul's desire is to thy name,
And the remembrance of thy face.

Mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. Ps. xxxviii. 4. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Matt. xi. 28.

IT is a sure sign that a man is awakened out of his sleep when he discovers the error of his dream. In the drawing up of water out of a deep well, so long as the bucket is under water, we feel not the weight of it; but as soon as it comes above water, it begins to hang heavy on the hand. When a man dives under water, he feels no weight of the water, though there may be many tons of it over his head; whereas a tub half full of the same water, taken out of the river, and set upon the same man's head, would be very burdensome to him, and make him soon grow weary of it. In like manner, so long as a man is over head in sin, he is not sensible of the weight of sin, it is not troublesome to him; but when he begins once to come out of that state of sin wherein he lay and lived before, then beginneth sin to hang heavy upon him, and he groans under the weight thereof. So long as sin is in the will, the proper seat of sin, a man feels not the weight of it, but, like a fool, it is sport and pastime to him to do evil. It is therefore a good sign that sin is removed out of its seat, out of its chair of state, when it becomes burdensome to us; and such a sense of sin may well be considered as an entrance into a state of grace. Give me, O Lord, a true sense of my sin, and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, and ability to embrace him as my Redeemer and Saviour.

Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Jer. iii. 22. *When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him; and said, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, &c.* Luke xv. 20-23.

HEAR, therefore, the voice of thy loving Father and Shepherd, O thou backsliding child and lost sheep, crying earnestly, Return, return! Do not run on in the broad way with the world any longer. Art thou not tired yet of the husks of the world? Dost thou feel no troubles in thy soul? Shall not these drive thee to God? Lo! thy Father and Shepherd seek thee. He is gone forth to call and meet thee already. He will receive thee willingly and joyfully. Come, only praying as the prodigal son, and he will freely forgive thee all, though thou hadst sinned ever so much. He is also able to heal and correct the most desperate corruptions of thy heart; he can deliver thee from the very jaws of hell and the devil; nay, if thou even wert possessed with more than seven devils, he can still cast them out. Begin to call upon him earnestly in prayer, and, poor and wretched as thou art, come to him as the physician of thy soul; for the physician and the sick, a rich Saviour and a poor sinner, are the best suited to one another. He healeth all our diseases, and can make possible what seems most impossible to thee.

Come, all ye vilest sinners, come,
He'll form your souls anew;
His Gospel and his heart have room
For rebels such as you.

'atch ye therefore, and pray always. Luke xxi. 36. *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.* Heb. xii. 1. *Watch, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.* Matt. xxiv. 42. *Take ye heed; watch and pray.* Mark xiii. 33.

THE hearts of men are not like unto clocks, which only want to be wound up once a day. Oh no! the dulness and distraction is too great and dangerous. We must lift them up many times a-day; yea, watch continually to lay aside every weight. Our going out and coming in, nay, all things, even the very least, we must do with prayer, always strictly examining what is the will of the Lord; else, if they are done after our own will, they do not tend to the glory of God, and cannot be attended with his blessing. But if we earnestly strive against our own will in prayer, patiently suffering every hour what the Lord thinks proper to lay upon us, and will be ruled by his hints and the slight strokes of his rod, many heavy afflictions and scourges and whips may be avoided; for the burdens which we bring upon ourselves, by our own will and impatience, are always the heaviest. A Christian has daily his proper burden, as a clock its weights, by which the flesh is kept under, so that the spirit can rise up; therefore when anything comes cross, he looks upon it as his weight for the day, to stir him up to the exercise of prayer and meditation in the word of God. O Lord, grant that I may always bear thy easy yoke, and never be the cause of my own distress and dulness!

Give an account of thy stewardship. Luke xvi. 2. *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccl. xii. 14. *For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* 2 Cor. v. 10.

O LORD, how have I wasted my time, goods, and faculties! Oh pardon me for thine infinite mercy's sake; blot out my debt by thy blood; and grant, that henceforth keeping a daily good account, and acting more prudently, faithfully, and diligently, my reckoning may not be false at last. But preserve me also from all needless cares, since the care to get something is not the steward's business, but only to husband everything faithfully. Teach me, O Lord, and give me wisdom and grace to govern my house, and manage all my affairs rightly. Be thou the principal governor and father of my family. I would be nothing but thy servant; direct me only in all things that I may not suffer or do any harm. He that does not expostulate with God, but accuses himself as guilty in all things, even his best performances, and flies to Christ as his only refuge, will be justified of God through the righteousness of his dear Son. And being thus adopted of God he is ready and willing to be governed and directed by him in all things as a child.

That awful day will surely come,
Th' appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.
2 Cor. xiii. 5.

MANY might be induced to pray for faith, if they did not presumptuously pretend to it; for such as have actually faith, often doubt whether they have any or not; and those that are without, imagine they have enough. But faith is only wrought in the souls of those who are deeply humbled by a thorough conviction of the greatness and heinousness of their sins, confessing themselves not only with their lips, but with a true sense of their hearts, to be the chief of sinners. Without this repentance we do not enter through the right gate, and our faith is only fancy; for faith is the greatest and most difficult thing even to a child of God; it receives Christ into the heart, and overcomes the devil, the world, and all sins, which is not easily done. Therefore, if the generality of people had true faith, nothing were easier than to believe; for what can be easier than to give a mere assent to the Bible as true, which is all that Christians mean by faith in general. The wicked, therefore, who live in sin, deceive themselves in thinking they have faith; for faith giveth victory over the world. And all who trust in their own works, deceive themselves too; for the prayer of faith is, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" "Lord, save, or I perish!" If then the first Christians had need to examine themselves, how much more have we? Therefore, the best and safest way is, to pray earnestly for that faith which has boldness, and triumphs even in death.

For thy name's sake, lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for thou art my strength. Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Ps. xxxi. 3–5. *When the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.* Num. x. 35.

EVERY one having his own particular gift, has also his own particular enemies, who lay various nets and hindrances in his way. But as everybody must clear the way for a king when he travels, much more so our enemies, when the King of kings guides us and goes before us. Grant, O Lord, that all my goings and restings may be done at thy will. Num. iv. 17, 23. Be graciously pleased to go always before me, and to make room, that mine enemies may be scattered, and fall into their own nets;—for thou, who dwellest in heaven, laughest at all, even mine inward spiritual enemies; and art able to confound their deepest craft and strongest power. Enlighten my darkness, blessed Jesus, that I may see my enemies distinctly; and strengthen my faith in thee, that I may not fear them. Be the captain of my salvation; lead me on praying and believing; and do thou fight all my battles for me. So shall I come off conqueror through thy love, and will give to thee eternal praise.

Great God, preserve my conscience clean;
Wash me from guilt, subdue my sin;
Thy love shall guard me from surprise,
Though threatening dangers round me rise.

And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. Exod. xvi. 15. See also 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

THIS manna was entirely different from common manna, which is shaken from the leaves of trees, and used only in medicine; this dropped down from the clouds, and was truly a miraculous production, as is evident from the following circumstances: that it fell but six days in the week; that it fell in such prodigious quantity as sustained almost three millions of souls; that a double portion of it fell the day before the Sabbath, and none on that day, &c. This manna is called "spiritual meat," because it signified spiritual blessings in heavenly things. Christ himself is the true manna, the bread of life, of which that was a figure. John vi. 49-51. The word of God is a manna too, by which our souls are nourished. Matt. iv. 4. The comforts of the Spirit are also a "hidden manna." Rev. ii. 17. These come down from heaven, as the manna did; are the support and comfort of the divine life in the soul while we are in the wilderness of this world. The manna gathered in the wilderness was not to be hoarded up, but eaten; so they that have received Christ must live upon him daily by faith, and not think of laying up a stock to-day to serve them to-morrow; they that did eat manna in the wilderness hungered again; whereas they that feed on Christ by faith shall never hunger. "Lord, evermore give us this bread!"

Whilst in the wilderness I stray,
Thy manna, Lord, I need;
And fresh bestow it every day,
Or I shall faint indeed.

Z.

What wilt thou, Queen Esther? And what is thy request? It shall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom. Esther v. 3.

DOST thou want nothing, O poor soul? Hast thou nothing to ask? O yes! you say, a great deal. Well then, draw near to thy gracious King and Bridegroom without fear. Lo! he holds out his golden sceptre to thee, saying, Only ask; not the half, but the whole of my kingdom shall be granted; nay, I will give myself unto thee. O dear soul, pray and tell him everything that is wanting, be it ever so great or ever so small. His loving-kindness will hear even the least petition; nay, he will seem to be ignorant of what thou dost not tell him. But whatever is poured out before him, is actually addressed and lodged in its proper place, and does not lie upon thy heart any longer, but upon his heart, which cannot rest till you are relieved. And if you have experienced his help aforetime in great or small things, you may depend on his readiness to help you out of troubles hereafter; only be earnest in prayer for his help. We often imagined we were willing and drawing near to him, but that he was unwilling, and refused our request; but it is not so; he rather draws us, and desires our relief more than we do; for it is he that works even this willing mind.

Are those the happy persons here,
Who dwell the nearest to their God?
Has God invited sinners near,
And Jesus bought this grace with blood?

What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? Luke xviii. 41.
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c. Matt. xxii. 37–39.

O LORD, dost thou ask me also this question? O yes! Well then, I answer, That I may see how gracious thou art; that, knowing thy love in thy light, I may love thee again. This is the sum and substance of all my prayer; because thou requirest it so seriously of me. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha." 1 Cor. xvi. 22. But thou dost not require it as of myself, well knowing that I can do nothing but signify only what I am to ask of thee, and what thou art willing to give and to work; for thou dost not require anything but what thou workest thyself, working everything that thou requirest; therefore faith and love being required by thee, I require the same from thee first. Grant, O grant them to me, that I may return them to thee again. And since nothing is pleasing to thee but what is thy own gift, I trust that thou wilt certainly hear and fulfil this my request. However, as my salvation is not grounded on my own, but on thine and thy Father's love and counsel, save me by free grace through thy merits, and let me go on covered all over with grace and pardon. This is treasure enough, by which my heart can be well satisfied.

He that can shake the worlds he made,
Or with his word, or with his rod;
His goodness, how amazing great!
And what a condescending God!

In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Isa. xxx. 15. *In your patience possess ye your souls.* Luke xxi. 19. *Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted.* Isa. vii. 4.

CHRISTIANS must suffer patiently, and patience is their armour, while God is fighting for them. But when we are unwilling to suffer, going about to make complaints everywhere, and to seek human comfort, or to rid ourselves, by our own contrivances, we lose the comfort of the Lord's help, we are stirring up the wasp-nest of our unruly thoughts, and bring more trouble upon ourselves and others; nay, we are fighting against God, who thereby intends to cure our impatience, pride, and anger; for the more peevish and wild we are, the more desperate is our disease; and, consequently, we have so much more need of such sharp but wholesome trials of affliction to mortify these bad passions of the flesh. Therefore we must not presume to murmur or complain, which will only make bad worse; for he who, through impatience, will flee from one trouble, may run into ten others; and though it is possible sometimes to rid ourselves out of trouble, yet the help is not so glorious and blessed as if we had waited for the help of the Lord. Grant me to wait always on thy help, for the Lord's good time will come, though he tarry long.

Sure I must bear, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.



Whoso loveth instruction, loveth knowledge; but he that hateth reproof is brutish. Prov. xii. 1.

NOTHING can be said so bad of us, which we have not the root of in our heart; and though we are convinced of and strive against our own weakness, yet we may not strive so earnestly as to conquer. Therefore God comes to our assistance in a sharp reproof from others; for he knows how to use even the faults of others to our good. And if we receive everything as from him alone, striving so much against this our frailty that we may not be offensive to our neighbour any more, we certainly gain a great victory and blessing. But if we grow impatient and make many excuses, being unwilling to put up with anything, we make evil worse, and neglect the amendment of ourselves and others. O Lord, make us better, and give us patience!

How should the sons of Adam's race
Be pure before their God?
If he contend in righteousness,
We fall beneath his rod.

To vindicate my words and thoughts
I'll make no more pretence;
Not one of all my thousand faults
Can bear a just defence.

Then seek the Lord while yet his ear
Is open to your call;
While offer'd mercy still is near,
Before his footstool fall.

Let sinners quit their evil ways,
Their evil thoughts forego,
And God, when they to him return,
Returning grace will show.

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans iii. 28. *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.* James ii. 24.

BOTH these apostles wrote by inspiration. St. Paul answers this question both affirmatively and negatively: That a man is justified before God by faith, without the deeds of the law; and in the 20th verse positively affirms, that "by the deeds o the law shall no flesh be justified." St. James asserts that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." St. Paul speaks of a justification before God; James of a justification before men. St. Paul speaks of the justification of penitent sinners before God; James of the justification of saints before men. St. Paul of the justification of sinners believing in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon and life; James, of the works of righteousness after justification by faith in Christ. Paul speaks of faith touching its office in the article of justification before God; James, of faith in its fruits and effects. Whenever there is a true faith, it must fix on Jesus Christ alone for salvation; that is its principal act. This same faith unites to Christ; and where there is union, there must be love; and where there is love, there must be obedience; and where obedience is, there will be a reward of grace; and when the reward is acknowledged to be of grace, and not of merit, God will have all the glory in time and eternity.

Let all who hold this faith and hope
In holy deeds abound;
Thus faith approves itself sincere,
By active virtue crowned.



DECEMBER 24.

For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy
have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that tho
with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy peopl
all the people that are upon the face of the earth.
xxxiii. 16.

READER, do you adopt the language of M
and request with him that, in all your rem
God's presence may go with you? That you b
permitted to stir without this distinguishing testi
that you are in the path of duty? Are you w
upon the Lord, earnest to serve him in sincerit
truth? "not being conformed to this world
transformed by the renewing of your mind,'
desirous to be numbered with his separate pe
Then you may expect the divine blessing, and
way to be prosperous. It was a distinguished
lege of the Israelites that they were to dwell
and not to be reckoned among the nations; an
the privilege and duty of the spiritual Israel
separate and distinct from the world; they
separate people in the love of God, in their el
in Christ, in the covenant of grace made with
in him, in effectual vocation, in their being
with him to all eternity. Nor are they rec
among the nations but as they are called out of
and generally treated as the refuse and offscour
all things; they do not reckon themselves to be
world, but as pilgrims and strangers in it. Lo
my lot be among thy separate people, the righ
both here and for evermore!

And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. i. 21.

SIN is the deadliest foe we have: it cast our first parents out of Paradise; it defaced God's image in man; it brought pain, sickness, and death into the world, and a spiritual death into the soul; it causes a distance from God, and a dislike to his holy ways; it exposes body and soul to the last judgment of a holy God, and will sink every unpardoned offender into everlasting destruction. How is this deadly foe to be conquered? Reader, be careful in this matter, and seek after a remedy that will be lasting and efficacious. Duties, prayers, tears, sacrifices, morality, and partial reformations, avail nothing in this case; all below Christ Jesus will prove physicians of no value. Jesus is the only Saviour; his blood is the only atonement for sin; this sprinkled upon the heart by the Spirit, and apprehended by faith, removes the guilt and curse of sin, and speaks pardon and peace; his grace breaks the power of sin and makes us hate it; thus is holiness secured in the heart and walk, as well as peace in the conscience. His people are all that believe in him, and depend upon him for pardon, peace, and everlasting salvation. In that happy number, reader, may thou and I be found! may we be enabled to look to him, to receive him as our Lord Jesus, able and willing to save to the very uttermost! And may we walk as the redeemed of the Lord, in righteousness *and true holiness* all the days of our life. Amen.

Pour out your heart before God. Ps. lxii. 8.

WHAT a different view does this lively text give of praying, when opposed to the usual expression of saying our prayers; saying what our books or our parents teach us! To pour out our hearts is like emptying a vessel of all its contents, so that nothing remains; and, oh! what a pleasing, awful important thing must this be! whatever is in my heart, my guilt or fears, my sins or sorrows, my cares and crosses, my wants, my dangers, my weaknesses, temptations, darkness, and ignorance, my doubts and anxieties respecting both body and soul, myself and others, the church and the world; every thought that arises, relating either to past, present, or future, I have leave to empty myself of, to pour out by drops or in a copious stream, till not one burden remains; and this before God, who is a prayer-hearing God. He can send a Hannah away no longer sad; can say, "Son, or daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." No wonder then that real prayer is so much unknown, or is such a cordial when it is made before him who is a refuge for us. Away then for ever with the prayer of the formalist; may I learn fervency of devotion from my heavenly Master, who in his agony prayed till drops of blood fell down! To a suffering Jesus I look for pardon and cleansing; O let me be accepted in the beloved, and purged daily from my defilements, and so become a vessel to honour, sanctified for the Master's use for ever. Amen.

By the grace of God I am what I am. 1 Cor. xv. 10. *Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God. As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* 1 Pet. i. 23, and ii. 2.

WHAT made the wonderful difference between Saul the Pharisee and Paul the Christian? Grace. What made him trample upon his former legal righteousness, and desire to be found in the righteousness of Christ? Grace, enlightening grace. Wherein consists the difference between the mere moralist and the real Christian? There may be a moral conduct where there is no grace, no principle of saving divine faith; there may be the fear of the Lord, taught by the precept of men, and not by the Spirit of God. One may attend the ordinances of religion; have a regard to outward decency; may have a name to live while dead; be high in profession, and at the same time a stranger to the power of godliness. Have I this principle, called Grace, in my soul? Have I been born of the incorruptible seed? Have I tasted that the Lord is gracious? Then shall I desire the sincere milk of the word, and thence will draw comfort and nourishment for my soul. Redeeming love shall be my delightful subject; it will sweeten everything in the service of Jesus, will constrain to extensive usefulness in my track of life; the grace of God in Christ Jesus will enlarge my views, keep me humble in heart, and give the praise where alone it is due. Through the sincere milk of the word may I grow *daily*, and be nourished up to eternal life!

We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.
2 Cor. v. 10.

AND are there scoffers, who madly question the coming of the Lord? The hour hastens when infidelity shall doubt no more. 1 Thes. iv. 16. How will sinners fade away, when, visible to all, the Judge shall appear on his great white throne. Before him shall stand the whole race of men, small and great; and by the testimony of God and their own consciences it shall be fully proved and openly declared, what they have been, and what they have done. Then sentence, most righteous, irrevocable, and big with eternity, shall be pronounced; on the wicked, everlasting punishment; on the righteous, life eternal! O think, what destruction is hanging over your heads, ye obstinate transgressors; for "behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." "Now is the accepted time, now the day of salvation;" now embrace him, as your offered, your all-sufficient Saviour; so shall you be for ever delivered from him as your angry Judge. If this you neglect, how shall you abide the day of his coming in flaming fire? Lift up thy head, my soul, none else is Judge but Christ! Will he who bore my sins, plead against me in judgment? No; I know in whom I have believed; and that he is able to keep that good thing, my soul, which I have committed to him, against that day.

e being many, are one body in Christ; and every one members one of another. Rom xii. 5. *But now are they many members, yet but one body. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* 1 Cor. xii. 20, 27. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* Ps. cxxxiii. 1.

O THE blessed communion of saints! one member has the benefit of all the other members, gifts, prayers, and ministrations. One prays for all, and all pray for one. What one has, the other enjoys also. It may be truly said of them, All is yours. There is no envy, no haughtiness, no strife or harm among real saints; for why should I envy that which is my own? Why should I despise that which serves for my necessary assistance?—and why should I strive against and hurt him, whose hurt is my own? Is there any strife between the members of our natural body? By no means; they all serve, help, and assist one another; and if one be injured and suffer, all the rest run to its relief, and are neither tired nor angry if the healing does not follow immediately. O Lord, unite us all in hearty fellowship and tender feelings for each other; and stop all open and subtle divisions which are fomented by lofty spirits, who always boast of mighty things, and to be wise above the rest. Suffer not a self conceited and a party spirit, which is the spirit of th world, to influence the members of thy body, b bless and grace them all with true humility; then shall live in a solid union and uninterrupted harmo

O glorious portion of the saints!
Let love suppress our sore complaints,
And tune our hearts and tongues to sing,
"All glory to our Sovereign King!"

Ye are the epistle of Christ, &c. 2 Cor. iii. 3.

THE image is beautiful and instructing: — "The epistle of Christ written not in tables of stone," not on a stony heart, but on a heart of flesh: a heart softened by grace, and made capable of good impressions; the heart, the seat of vital religion. So runs the gracious promise. (Jer. xxxi. 33.) The word read and preached is not effectual without the operation of the Spirit of God. By the Spirit, Christians are cast into the gospel mould; thereby get evangelical, spiritual, and heavenly dispositions; their resemblance to Christ is gradually increased; they have the witness in themselves; have the comfortable experience that they are Christ's, when they can read his image on their hearts. They are manifestly declared to others that they are the epistles of Christ, by their good conversation and conduct in the world confessing him before men, and speaking forth his praise. "Holiness to the Lord" is written with lovely characters on this epistle. Am I the epistle of Christ? Do I read the epistles of Christ in my Bible, and find them written on my heart? Do I read the mind of God there, and heartily approve of his mind? O blessed discovery! What condescending grace! The great God, by his Spirit, to dictate epistles so loving and kind! the great God, whom I have offended, to send me a pardon, not only in his word but by his Son also. I would read this epistle from heaven over and over again. O how much do I find in it, while the Spirit opens my understanding to understand the Scriptures.

ALLELUIA. Rev. xix. 1.

THOU began the year, O my soul, with an Hosannah, imploring the Lord's blessing, canst thou now conclude it with an Alleluia? Surely thou canst celebrate the praise of a gracious and loving God. Take a review of the past year; hast thou not had many mercies? Have not the eyes of the Lord been upon thee for good? Hath he not conducted thee through many dangers? Canst thou not, with truth as well as gratitude, set up thine Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me"? 1 Sam. vii. 12. If thou hast not been fruitful in good works, is thy Lord to blame or thyself? Whatever good has been done in thee or by thee, surely belongs to the favour of God; and whatever has caused shame or humiliation, is nowhere chargeable but upon thyself. "Bless the Lord, then, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name; forget not all his benefits." Ps. ciii. 2–4. Thou wilt soon, O my soul, enter upon another year; let dear-bought experience teach thee to avoid all occasions of evil, and keep thee close to thy God. If thou livest to see another day, set out afresh, and remember to offer thy daily sacrifice of obedience as well as of praise to thy gracious God. Let every revolving day remind thee of thy approaching last day, and daily be thou preparing to meet thy God, that so, when thy days are ended, thou mayest sing Alleluias before the throne of God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

"PRAY always," "pray without ceasing," "be instant in prayer," are the injunctions of the word of God. And what can be more in accordance with your condition, as a fallen and dependent creature, than the spirit of these requirements? Wanting every grace, filled with the corruptions of an evil heart, you daily grovel in the dust and for the things of the dust. But this is not your natural element; it is the mournful effect of your apostasy from God, and your willingness to remain in that state. Yet it is not God's will that you do so. He hath provided grace, yea, even for the chief of sinners, and he desires you to come unto him and receive of the riches of his mercy. He has it in store ready to distribute in answer to your prayers. That mercy and that grace you need, and hence this repeated admonition, "Pray always," "pray without ceasing," "be instant in prayer." But let your prayer be that of sincerity and faith: sincerity, because God knoweth the thoughts and trieth the reins of the children of men, because he looketh on the heart: faith, because the infinite holiness of an infinitely just God can only see and hear you in and through the righteousness of Christ, and because you shall not receive unless you believe that God is willing and ready to give. Think not, that to utter often a few words, however elegantly arranged, in the form and posture of prayer, is to obey the command, "Pray always." The heart must contain the wishes and feelings that the tongue expresses. He that said, "Pray always," said likewise, "Pour out your hearts."

There must also be a patient waiting for an answer. God has his own set times, and on these you must wait. Does he delay? Your heart may not be ready to receive the graces you ask. You may have asked amiss; you may doubt; you may not be sufficiently anxious; there may not be truth in the inward man; you may come short of the full assurance of faith. But even though he delay long, doubt not God is true; be instant in prayer.

But pray not of yourselves; for ye know not what ye should pray for as ye ought. It is the Holy Spirit that helpeth the infirmities of those who are true suppliants. Seek then the Spirit, and you will not seek in vain; God giveth the Spirit to them that ask him. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." Come, then, prayerless soul, come to God for his Spirit: he shall teach you all things; he shall teach you how to pray. Come to God for his Christ; he hath offered him to you, and Christ has already paid your debt. Come to him and get your receipt. Come without money and without price. Come with only a knowledge that you need. Come in prayer. But where shall you come? Come to the Bible: God is there.

PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON



